

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

INSIDE

Workers in Atlanta send
Pathfinder books to Cuba

— PAGE 9

VOL. 62 NO. 11 MARCH 23, 1998

U.S. hands off Iraq, Kosovo!

Class-conscious fighters around the world must lead opposition to military intervention in Kosovo by Washington and other imperialist powers, whether in the guise of United Nations "peacekeeping" troops, NATO soldiers, the Western European Union, or anything else. This is the best way to support the Albanians' courageous struggle for self-determination in Kosovo.

Washington and its rivals in Europe, like wolves in sheep's clothing, are attempting to use the atrocities carried out by Serbian

EDITORIAL

government forces in Kosovo as a pretext to intervene, as they earlier did in Bosnia. Once again, their actions have nothing to do with "humanitarian" missions. The Clinton administration has organized its military intervention in Bosnia to deal blows to its imperialist competitors in Europe, blocking them from getting a firmer economic foothold in the Balkan country. The partition of that Yugoslav republic and its occupation by tens of thousands of NATO troops was the first imperialist attempt coming out of the 1990-91 Persian Gulf slaughter to use direct military force to try to crush working-class resistance in one of the workers states in Europe.

Capitalism has not been restored in any of the republics of the former Soviet Union or the other workers states, where nationalized property relations, monopoly of foreign trade, and economic planning, however deformed, still exist. The imperialist powers can only open up these countries for capitalist exploitation through force. They face the challenge of crushing the kind of resistance waged by tens of thousands of students and others in Serbia that began in late 1996, the armed revolt in Albania last year, and the escalating battles for independence now being fought by working people in Kosovo.

The U.S. rulers' occupying army in Yu-

Continued on Page 14



Tens of thousands marched in Pristina March 9 to protest killings by Serb cops

Mass rallies sweep Kosovo as imperialists push to intervene

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES
AND GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece — Tens of thousands of people mobilized in Pristina, the capital of Kosovo, March 9 demanding an end to the repression and massacres of ethnic Albanians in the preceding days. Up to 200,000 people demonstrated throughout Kosovo that day, in the largest outpouring in a decade in the fight for national rights of Albanians in the Serb-occupied province.

In the name of fighting "terrorists," the Serbian regime in Belgrade is attempting to use its police force and now army troops to crush the resistance of working people in Kosovo. Washington and other imperialist powers have seized on the events in Kosovo as a pretext to deepen their intervention in

the Yugoslav workers state. A U.S.-led NATO occupation force has been in Bosnia for the last two years, and there are 1,000 United Nations "peacekeeping" troops in Macedonia. Washington has for years led the charge in maintaining an economic embargo against Belgrade. Nevertheless, the imperialists have not succeeded in their aim of reestablishing capitalist rule in any of the republics that made up Yugoslavia.

At a March 9 meeting in London that also included the foreign ministers of Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia, U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright argued for forceful action against the regime headed by Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic. "We don't want a repeat of 1991, when the

Continued on Page 12

Student rallies in Egypt denounce U.S. aggression in Middle East

BY MAXI ORTIZ
AND ALFONSE MALONE

CAIRO, Egypt — A wave of demonstrations against Washington swept most universities here the third week of February, sparked by the U.S. government's preparations for a military assault against Iraq.

"We despise the bully from the United States treating our Iraqi brothers, and all other Arabs, as victims and beggars," said Hossam El Din Mustafa in a March 8 interview here. Mustafa is a student at Cairo University and an organizer of the student actions that peaked at 25,000 — nearly half the students on that campus — on February 22, the day before United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan struck the deal with the Saddam Hussein government that deflected a U.S.-organized massive military strike for the moment, while simultaneously codifying imperialist prerogatives and tightening Washington's "rules."

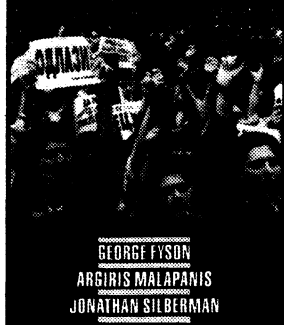
"We marched to stand with the people of Iraq when it looked like they would be slaughtered once again," Mustafa added. "And we marched to show our dignity and our determination to fight imperialism."

Most of the two dozen students *Militant* reporters spoke with, including a number

Continued on Page 8

Next week's *Militant* will
feature first-hand
coverage from a team of
reporters in Kosovo.

THE TRUTH ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA

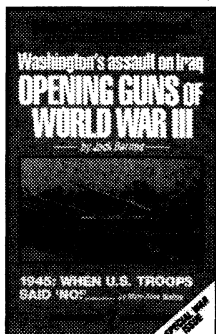


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Meatpackers in Canada end four-month strike

BY SUSAN BERMAN

BURLINGTON, Ontario — Under the threat of a plant closure, workers at the Maple Leaf Foods hog-processing plant here voted on March 6 to accept the company's contract demands and return to work. The 900 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers have been on strike since mid-November.

At the request of the company, the government ordered a vote on the company's "final offer." It includes wage cuts of up to 40 percent, the introduction of part-time work, and forcing workers to pay for wash-room breaks exceeding 20 minutes per week. Maple Leaf owner Michael McCain had announced the previous week he would close the plant by March 20 if workers voted down the contract. The company closed its plant in Edmonton in December in face of a strike by 900 workers there. The Burlington meatpackers voted 454 to 368 to accept the offer.

In order to sweeten the deal, McCain raised the contract signing bonus or "buyout" terms from Can\$45 to Can\$50 (Can\$1 = US\$0.70) for every month worked in the plant and backed down on his demand to eliminate the seniority of workers returning to the job. All workers were guaranteed

a minimum \$10,000 buyout, whether or not they plan to return to work. Many workers got other jobs during the course of the strike.

"My buyout is \$17,000. If I take that and run I'm just creating problems for my kids

Continued on Page 11

Fund will help print 'Militant'

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Supporters of the *Militant* around the world are kicking off a \$110,000 fund drive that will help make possible special reporting trips, like the team that is en route to Kosovo as this issue goes to press, after spending several days in Cairo, Egypt, covering a meeting of the World Federation of Democratic Youth and reporting on protests by students in the region against Washington's war moves in the Mideast. The *Militant* Fund will also help finance the operating expenses of producing this paper and the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*. In February, another *Militant* re-

Continued on Page 4

Tel Aviv holds Lebanese hostages

An Israeli Supreme Court ruling in the first week of March approved the Zionist state's detention of 21 Lebanese citizens without charge. Tel Aviv's justification was a possible swapping of prisoners in the future. They also claim that most of those arrested are Hezbollah members. Hezbollah is an armed-resistance organization fighting to expel all Israeli forces from Lebanon. Zvi Rish, the detainees' lawyer, is seeking an appeal, but no date has been set. "In this case, the state is admitting that it is not blaming them for anything personal, but that they are being held for a goal," Rish said. Under Israeli law, prisoners can be held indefinitely without trial or charges under "administrative detention." For more than a dozen years, Israeli troops have occupied 10 percent of Lebanon.

1,200 missing in Pakistan floods

At least 100 people in southwestern Pakistan perished and more than 1,200 are missing since heavy rains began March 1. Schools, hospitals, and hundreds of homes were damaged or leveled. Approximately 25,000 residents were rendered homeless, according to local officials. The effects of the torrential downpour were particularly deadly because of the low living standards capitalism imposes on people in that country. Most of the structures washed away were mud and straw huts. Poor roads also hampered government relief.

Kenyan students: 'Moi must go!'

On March 2 some 8,000 students at Kenyatta University in the Kenyan capital city of Nairobi protested the government of Daniel arap Moi. At least 17 students were suspended from school. Then on March 5 students blocked a highway with burning tires and lumber to protest the suspensions. Kenyan cops came in to squash the protest, beating activists with batons, and launching tear gas at them. Students fought back with stones and sticks. Hundreds of protesters marched through downtown Nairobi earlier that day chanting "Moi must go!" Adding to the ferment on the campus, which lies some 10 miles north of the capital, 2,000 students were banned from school because



they were unable to pay tuition, which has increased eightfold since 1994.

Rail strikes are planned in Italy

When the state-owned railway in Italy announced plans to fire five rail workers on charges of corruption, the government backed the dismissals. This sets the stage for a confrontation with the rail unions, which have called two protest strikes for March. The dispute is shaping up as a test of forces between the union and the bosses, in preparation for government moves to "reform" the Italian rail industry. A year ago, strike threats forced the government of Romano Prodi to back off plans to break the rail network into pieces to try to increase productivity. Now, as Rome moves to join a single European currency, Prodi's government has been warned by European Union finance ministers that the rail industry is one of Rome's "major challenges" that must be reformed. More than 75 percent of the staff on the railroad are unionized — the highest

percentage in Italy. An article in London's *Financial Times* commented, "Taking on the rail unions will not be easy."

Inmates in Mexico fight back

Inmates at San Maria Ixotel prison in Oaxaca, Mexico, rebelled against harsh treatment and poor living conditions March 3. They forced the authorities to agree to fire the prison director and meet other demands. The battle began when 740 out of 1,200 prisoners refused to stand for head counts a second day in a row. Prison officials called in armed state cops to "assist," sparking an immediate response by inmates, who fought back with rocks and metal poles. They disarmed 66 state cops and took them prisoner.

Later, the cops launched a second wave of attacks, opening fire on the inmates. This provoked prisoners' relatives outside, who stoned the cops. That same day, with two cops dead and six wounded, the state officials agreed to the prisoners' main demands and the cops were released. The conditions the inmates were protesting include pimping and drug dealing by prison guards and police-run extortion rings that often charge inmates for food.

Chilean Pehuenches defend land

The Chilean company Ralco is trying to buy up the land around the Bio-Bio River in order to build a \$480 million dam. The dam would flood the lands and homes of the 385 Pehuenche families who have resided there for 500 years. The government rationalizes the move saying it will provide 18 percent of the energy needed in central Chile. The dam will only provide energy for 50 years, while the Pehuenchen people will be torn away from their land for good, according to

Domingo Namuncura, director of the National Corporation for Indigenous Development. Although some Pehuenchen families are selling their land under the pressure of economic hardships, there has been ongoing resistance to the dams. Nicolasa Quintreman said when the energy firm came to her doorstep to try to cut a deal, "I said I'd get my machete and smash his car.... The only way I leave this land is dead."

Clinton 'certifies' Colombia

In its now annual imperial ritual of declaring which governments in Latin America are sufficiently cooperative in the so-called war on drugs, the Clinton administration granted "certification" to Colombia February 26 under a national interest waiver. The previous two years, the U.S. government had threatened economic sanctions against the regime in Bogota, asserting that Colombian president Ernesto Samper had received campaign money from drug merchants. Colombian president Ernesto Samper lauded the waiver as "justice." But U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright explained that the move was made to send a signal to the next regime there, following the May 31 presidential elections to replace Samper. "The current government [in Colombia] has not demonstrated full political support for counternarcotics efforts," Albright said. She called for "increased future cooperation" and "to support those in Colombia who are striving to strengthen the rule of law." Congressional officials clarified that "cooperation" means the smoother flow of weapons and ammunition into the hands of security forces to use against "narco-guerrillas" and others.

U.S. gov't probes school prayer

The House Judiciary Committee voted March 4 to approve a constitutional amendment proposed by Rep. Ernest Istook that allows prayer in public schools, religious symbols on government property, and state funding for private schools. The measure now goes before the full House of Representatives, which will take up the issue for the first time since 1971. A two-thirds majority vote by the House and Senate is required, followed by state legislatures' adoption, for an amendment to the constitution.

INS increases deportations

Between October 1997 and January 1998 the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) deported more than 34,000 undocumented immigrants — 70 percent higher than the year before. Some 12,755 deportees were labeled "criminals" and 15,239 more were removed through so-called voluntary departures. The INS is trying to kick out 127,300 immigrants by October 1998. In order to carry out its campaign, INS commissioner Doris Meissner boasted that they are adding "additional space to detain approximately 2,500 more" immigrants per day, as well as adding another 165 detention and deportation cops.

— BRIAN TAYLOR

THE MILITANT

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Elections and protests demanding jobs reflect workers' resistance in Germany

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Gerhard Schröder, the Social Democratic head of the state government in Lower Saxony, Germany, was reelected March 1, defeating Christian Democratic Union (CDU) candidate Christian Wulff. The state election was closely watched on a national level as a prelude to the September 27 federal elections, which include the post of chancellor, the head of the federal government.

In the Lower Saxony vote, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) won 47.9 percent of the votes, up from 44.3 percent in the 1994 elections. The CDU, which leads the federal coalition government, won 35.9 percent of the votes, down from 36.4 percent in 1994. The Greens got 7 percent, down 0.4 percent, and the Free Democratic Party (FDP), a small but important coalition partner in Chancellor Helmut Kohl's coalition government, fell just short of winning the 5 percent needed to be seated in the local parliament.

This was the biggest vote the social democrats have ever received in Lower Saxony state elections. "The result is fantastic," Schröder said, "better than I had dared dream of, even in my wildest dreams."

The SPD had held off naming its candidate for chancellor until after the poll. Party chairman Oskar Lafontaine, who ran unsuccessfully against Helmut Kohl in last federal elections, and Schröder were the leading possibilities. Schröder is often compared in the press with Anthony Blair, the recently elected Labour Party prime minister in the United Kingdom. Both politicians take more openly procapitalist positions on domestic economic issues than traditional social democrats.

Soon after Schröder's victory was announced, Lafontaine endorsed him as the SPD candidate for chancellor. This will be formally ratified at the party's convention April 17 in Leipzig.

Before the elections in Lower Saxony, Schröder said that he would not stand as a candidate for chancellor if he received a lower percentage of the vote than in 1994. Chancellor Helmut Kohl strongly backed the CDU candidate Wulff and held 11 big election meetings in Lower Saxony to try to cut across Schröder's support.

Unemployment remains at record levels

The main theme in the social democrat's election campaign was unemployment, which is setting new post-World War II records nearly every month. In February unemployment in western Germany crept down a tenth of a point to 10.4 percent, but in eastern Germany the jobless rate grew from 21.1 percent to 21.3 percent. Thousands of people in 200 cities took part in protests demanding a 35-hour workweek and higher unemployment benefits. These actions are planned to continue monthly until the September elections.

Schröder repeatedly quoted Kohl's vow to reduce unemployment to half by the year 2000 — a promise that is extremely unlikely to be met.

Kohl's leadership of the CDU has been



Hundreds of thousands of workers have protested cuts in subsidies for national industries; pay, pension, and sick leave cuts; as well as unemployment, like in demonstration above demanding jobs March 5 in Berlin. The threat of protests by workers hovers over Germany's upcoming federal elections in September.

questioned during the last year by younger leaders in state governments, and after the elections in Lower Saxony speculations grew that Wolfgang Schäuble, the most popular CDU politician, may replace Helmut Kohl as candidate for chancellor.

European Monetary Union

The governments constituting the European Union have decided to introduce a single currency, the Euro, on Jan. 1, 1999, with the mantra that it could become a competitor to the U.S. dollar in world trade and finance. Having a deficit of no more than 3 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the main criteria for qualifying for the single currency. With what the *New York Times* described as "minimal tinkering," government officials across western Europe released figures in February that showed all of the 15 EU states except Greece had met this criteria. The Italian government, for example, with one of the weakest economies among the imperialist countries, announced a deficit of 2.7 percent, the same as Germany.

The French government managed to show a deficit of exactly 3 percent. It is now expected that 11 countries will be part of the single currency on Jan. 1, 1999. In early May the EU will formally decide which countries will take part from the start. The governments of the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Sweden have announced they will not participate from the beginning, although they meet the criteria.

Officials of the Bundesbank in Germany and other central banks in Europe have raised questions over whether all of the European Monetary Union (EMU) candidates, especially Italy and Belgium, have really met the criteria to join the single currency.

In Germany there is opposition to joining the single currency within every political party, as it is expected that the Euro will be weaker than the German mark and because the austerity measures — like cuts in sick leave payments and pensions and the introduction of tuition fees for students — that the single currency symbolizes. These austerity measures also tend to increase the deflationary pressures already at work in the crises-ridden capitalist world system, threatening economic collapse. Schröder had been among the politicians in Germany to propose a delay of the start of the single currency. During his election campaign, he steered away from the issue of the single currency. Immediately after his nomination for chancellor, however, Schröder promised to convene a "roundtable of the best brains in the land to analyze the risks of the euro in an impartial manner." Schröder said he would recruit Karl Otto Pöhl, a former president of the German central bank and a Social Democrat, to lead the panel. Recently 150 prominent German economists made an appeal for a delay of the single currency.

In reassurance to Bonn's European partners, the Social Democratic Party's parliamentary leader Rudolf Scharping issued a response to Schröder's statement, declaring, "The goal of our party is to protect the consumers and ensure the stability of the currency. This has nothing to do with Euro-

skepticism."

Kohl is set back over taxes

The biggest setback for Kohl has been the stalling of a "tax reform" by the social democrats in the Bundesrat, the upper house of the German parliament. Taxes are high in Germany, and next to unemployment are seen as the biggest political question. Both issues are deeply connected to the reunification of Germany, where two states with different social relations, a capitalist state in the west and a workers state in the east, began a process of unification of antagonistic social relations that has plunged Germany's rulers into crises. Schröder is sounding the theme of reducing income taxes and raising child allowances, while accusing the governing coalition of just wanting to lower taxes for the rich, such as corporate taxes and taxes on capital, which are included in Kohl's tax reform.

On February 6 the Bundesrat, which has a Social Democratic majority, approved a law that will reduce benefits to asylum seekers to the absolute minimum. Those who have come into the country "illegally" will receive no help at all. Some 200,000 war refugees from Bosnia will be especially hard hit by this measure.

One of the more outspoken supporters of this new law is the Social Democratic minister of interior in Schröder's Lower Saxony state government. Stricter asylum laws is a major theme in both the CDU and SPD campaigns. This feeds the right wing, with the media reporting an increase in rightist violence, especially in eastern Germany. Other themes that are expected in Schröder's campaign include harsher punishment for sex crimes and reducing unemployment by creating jobs at lower wages. Schröder's election program will be voted on at the special SPD convention in Leipzig.

Resistance among workers

The shift among workers toward an increased support for the social democrats in Germany follows a similar phenomena in

the United Kingdom and France, where the Tory and the Gaullist governments respectively suffered electoral defeats last year. In Sweden, where the social democrats a year ago were capturing less than 30 percent of the vote in polls and the Conservative party was over 30 percent the picture has also changed. In the latest poll the Social Democrats had 36.5 percent support and the conservatives 27.5 percent. In Denmark, the minority social democratic government is feeling some wind in its sails and has called early elections for March 11.

This reflects resistance among workers to attempts to impose austerity measures and cut backs. The public workers unions in Germany have had two rounds of warning strikes this winter, for instance. Negotiations have been stalled and will go into an arbitration process next week, which could end with a strike vote by the public workers. One of the main issues in the negotiations is the governments' insistence on lowering sick leave payments from 100 percent to 80 percent, an issue that spurred labor demonstrations and strikes of hundreds of thousands in 1996, when Kohl's government made an earlier attempt to lower these benefits.

Other unions are also entering negotiations with similar demands as the public workers: increases in wages and benefits to compensate for inflation, more even wages and hours between workers in the east and west, and more jobs through government funding and a reduced workweek. Students have also been protesting the introduction of tuition fees in Germany, where education has been free of charge.

Crises in Asia hits German economy

Deutsche Bank announced January 29 that it had to put aside 1.4 billion D-marks (\$788 million) to guarantee expected losses on loans in Asia. The bank said it had lent 9 billion D-marks to enterprises in south Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

Of all the imperialist financial institutions around the world, German banks are the most exposed to the Asian crises. At the end of 1996, their loans in these countries totaled more than \$120 billion, about 17 percent of the total international bank credits to the crises-ridden economies in Asia, according to the Swedish daily *Svenska Dagbladet*.

The rise in the business cycle in Germany slowed down the last quarter in 1997, according to a report by Bundesbank, and even the export, which had been the motor force in the upturn, showed signs of a slowing down due to lower demand. Investments were also slowing down due to uncertainty about profits, although industry is operating at its highest capacity since reunification. Business failures, which have been rising every year since 1992, rose with 6.2 percent in 1997 compared to 1996. "It cannot be excluded that a weaker growth in Asia will have severe consequences for German exports if it dampens the import there. At the same time big devaluations there will give the industry there competitive advantages," stated the Bundesbank report.

Carl-Erik Isacsson is a member of the metalworkers union in Södertälje, Sweden.

London won't extradite McAliskey

BY MEGAN ARNEY

London announced March 9 it would not extradite Irish independence fighter Roisín McAliskey to Germany. McAliskey was arrested in November 1996 on trumped-up charges that she was involved in an Irish Republican Army (IRA) bombing of British barracks in Germany in June of that year.

British home secretary Jack Straw said London's decision was based on medical grounds and to extradite McAliskey would be "unjust and oppressive."

Held for 16 months, without charges or a trial, McAliskey's case garnered international support. She was arrested in Northern Ireland, and was held in various British prisons since. Her health deteriorated as she was psychologically traumatized, strip-searched, and refused medical treatment although she was pregnant. She remains in a psychiatric hospital today, and still faces the

possibility of prosecution by London. Neither the British nor German governments offered any substantiated evidence against McAliskey. The one witness who is supposed to have identified her retracted his identification on German television.

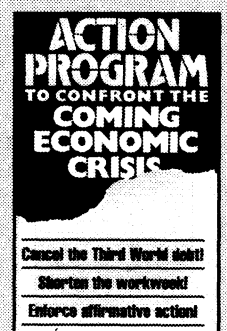
Meanwhile, Sinn Féin, the party leading the fight for a united Ireland, said they would not reenter the negotiations with London until they can meet with British prime minister Anthony Blair. The meeting, according to the Sinn Féin office in Washington, D.C., is set for March 12 in London. Sinn Féin had been a part of the negotiations until they were ousted after supposedly being connected with two killings in Northern Ireland last month. Sinn Féin chief negotiator Martin McGuinness will be on an East Coast tour of the United States March 11-18. Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams will join him following the meeting with Blair.

from Pathfinder

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Volunteers scan books, print shop better's maintenance

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

NEW YORK — The project organized by San Francisco volunteers to digitize Pathfinder's backlist of books is expanding. Eight more titles have been shipped out to supporters in London, England; Greensboro, North Carolina; and around the world. This makes a total of 25 books that are being either scanned or proofread.

Some of the Pathfinder newest titles sent out include, *Writings of Leon Trotsky* (1932), *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom* by Nelson Blackstock, and *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*. These books join the process already under way to put *The Founding of the Socialist Workers Party* by James P. Cannon and Evelyn Reed's *Sexism and Science* in electronic form.

As these supporters of Pathfinder's mission — to keep the history of the modern working-class movement in print and accessible for fighters today — move forward, staff members at the Pathfinder Building here have made progress in preparing to produce the digitized books using the time saving computer-to-plate (CTP) machinery.

Pointing to the importance of keeping Pathfinder books in print, communist workers and others in the United States sold 245 books to fellow unionists last month — more than double the amount from January.

Labor-saving scanner

"Black-and-white graphics — maps, charts, photographs, illustrations — constitute hundreds of pages of Pathfinder books, which must be digitized along with book text," explained Eva Braiman, a staff member in the prepress department of Pathfinder's print shop. Pathfinder books use graphic images that enhance the books by making them more interesting, concrete, and clearer to understand. It takes great care and precision to produce these images with high quality standards.

Many of these graphics currently exist only as film negatives. Others are in an electronic format that is not up to modern standards for digital graphics. So Braiman and Pathfinder editorial staff member Michael Baumann took action to resolve this.

"We visited a company that digitizes magazines and photos for leading industries, in order to see if technology existed that could do a quality duplicate of Pathfinder book graphics," Baumann said.

By consulting with companies using CTP and attending a conference on digital book

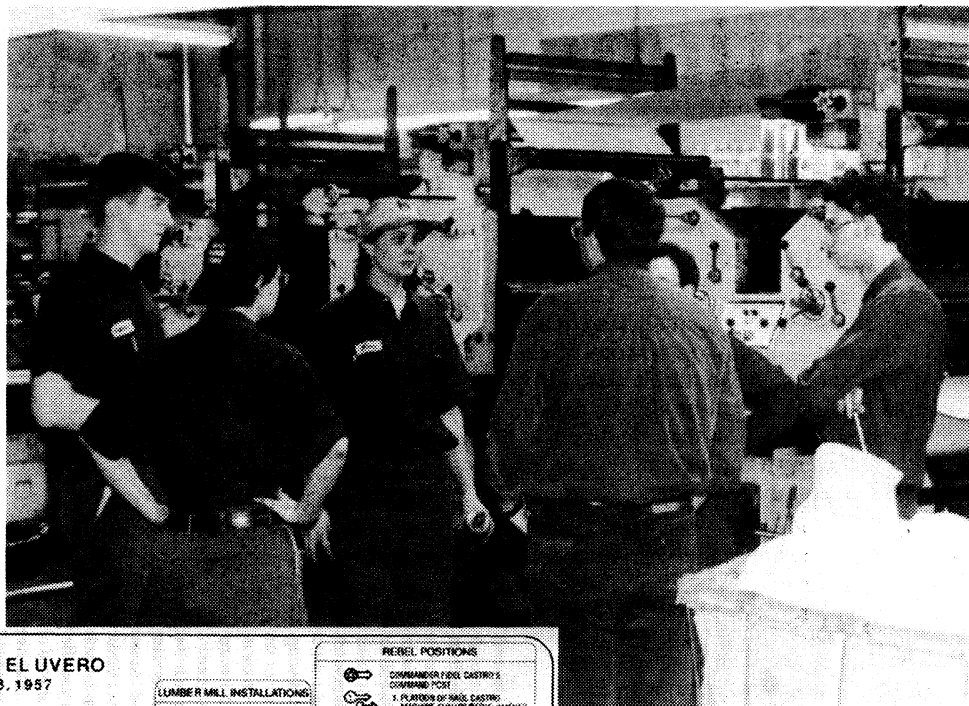
production, Baumann and Braiman learned about copy-dot scanners — high-powered image processors that digitally capture every dot from a piece of film, making a replica that loses virtually no detail or quality. "We gave them graphics that represent some of the most detailed work," Braiman said, like a battle map designed by Eric Simpson for *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*. The results were nearly perfect.

This step of production can now be done by a service that produces top quality work at a relatively inexpensive price. And those newly digitized graphics can be made available to the teams of volunteers who scan and proofread the books.

"This technology will allow us to keep in step with the volunteers who are scanning the text of Pathfinder books," Baumann explained. The many hundreds of hours that were necessary to produce the intricate maps, battle plans and photo signatures with the quality Pathfinder is known for in such books as Ernesto Che Guevara's *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War*, and Harry Villegas's *Pombo, A Man's of Che's "guerrilla"* can now be preserved. "In the case of photographs, negatives currently used for pictures can be damaged and will degenerate over time, but the digital files" have no expiration date and are infinitely reprintable.

Taking on long-term maintenance

The web press department staff has taken steps in the last week to upgrade maintenance. Róger Calero, who heads up the web department, explained, "Our first step was



Top: Militant/Brian Taylor; Left: copyright Pathfinder

Above, the web press department in Pathfinder's print shop discusses taking steps to upgrade maintenance of its machines. Left, a map from *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* used to test the precision of the copy-dot scanning machines. The result was a virtually exact replica the Pathfinder book graphic.



to visit other shops to learn" methods of organizing the web press from workers with many years of experience in the trade. Along these lines, they decided to overhaul the press's quarter folder. The staff brought in a professional mechanic, trained at installing this equipment, to ensure the job was done right.

"The web press is a complicated machine that takes time to be trained on," noted Paco Sánchez, who worked closely with the mechanic on the quarter folder. "A well-kept, smooth-running web machine increase productivity and reduces time necessary to train new workers. The difference in productivity after the overhaul was immediate," he said.

"We are not professional mechanics

here," said Ryan Kelly who also runs the web, "so we employ the skills that other workers outside the print shop have." In addition to that step, the staff implemented a maintenance program that calls for regular attention to maintaining the cleanliness of the machine.

Keeping the web in optimum condition allows the staff to harness its full capacities, which cuts down labor and training time, makes production work more accurate with less scrap, and upholds the print shop's high standards of quality.

Special offer: \$5 with any subscription to the Militant or Perspectiva Mundial

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1991 report by Mary-Alice Waters \$8.00

'Militant' launches fund

Continued from front page

porting team traveled to Cuba to cover the Havana Book Fair and other developments, such as how working people in Cuba are collectively confronting the challenge of increasing agricultural and industrial production today.

The Militant Fund runs from March 14-May 10. It will coincide with a soon-to-be launched special appeal for capital contributions of at least \$1,000 and in many cases much larger — often drawn from supporters of the socialist movement receiving windfalls — that will help finance long-term capital investments to revolutionize the production of Pathfinder books and keep them all in print (see article above).

There are a lot of signs that this fund can get off to a strong start. Readers of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* have responded enthusiastically to the Books for Cuba Fund (see article on page 9) and given nearly \$10,000 to help cover the recent international reporting teams.

The success of the Militant Fund, which runs simultaneously with the *Militant* and

Perspectiva Mundial subscription drive, will depend on contributions from as broad a range of workers and others who read the socialist press as possible.

In Washington, D.C., New York, and other cities, *Militant* supporters are already making plans to hold special fund-raising forums early in the drive to discuss some of the central issues in world politics today and to get pledges to the fund from the beginning. Joel Britton, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party's trade union work, and the *Militant* writers Argiris Malapanis and Jack Willey, currently in Yugoslavia, are among the speakers *Militant* supporters are inviting to speak at these meetings.

The chart accompanying this article shows the initial pledges to the fund. *Militant* supporters in several other cities in the United States and elsewhere plan to adopt goals in the next week. Contributions to the fund can be sent to the *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Martín Koppel is the director of the *Militant* Fund.

Militant Fund Drive March 14-May 10

CITY/COUNTRY	GOAL
United States	
Atlanta	3,200
Birmingham	2,500
Chicago	9,500
Detroit	3,500
Miami	2,300
New York	14,000
Newark	8,500
Philadelphia	4,000
Pittsburgh	5,000
San Francisco	10,000
Seattle	7,000
Twin Cities	7,000
Washington, D.C.	3,000
U.S. total	79,500
Canada	
Vancouver	1,000
Toronto	2,414
Montreal	1,517
Canada total	4,931
Canada goal	5,000
New Zealand	
Auckland	930
Christchurch	700
NZ total	1,630
INT'L TOTAL:	86,061

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Margarita Samad Matias, Professor of Human Rights and Women's Studies at City College New York

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'Militant' launches subscription drive

BY NAOMI CRAINE

As we go to press, socialist workers and youth around the world are about to kick off an eight-week campaign to win new readers to the socialist press. Between March 14 and May 10, supporters of the *Militant* will be hitting the streets to sell 1,400 introductory subscriptions to the socialist weekly, 450 subscriptions to its Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 600 copies of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* in English, French, Spanish, and Swedish. In addition to goals in different cities, socialists in the trade unions have taken goals for sales to their co-workers.

This subscription drive will build on the momentum of stepped-up single sales of the two periodicals, the issue of *New Internationalist* containing the article "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq" and the recently published booklet *Celebrating the Homecoming of Ernesto Che Guevara's Reinforcement Brigade to Cuba*. This campaign runs through March 15.

The first week of the subscription campaign will be a target week, with supporters in various cities taking steps to get out extra sales to plant gates, working-class neighborhoods, political events, campuses, and elsewhere. The *Militant* will run a weekly chart showing where the drive stands beginning in the issue printed March 26. Totals will be based on sub-

scriptions and money received at the *Militant* office by noon each Tuesday.

Supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* in Miami are organizing a special sales and reporting team to Puerto Rico March 27-31. Among other things, they will report on the convention of the Federation of Pro-Independence University Students (FUPI). Those who would like to join the team can contact Rollande Girard in Miami at (305) 756-1020.

Below we are printing some notes sent in from supporters on recent sales. The *Militant* encourages its readers to jot down a few lines about sales — including special outings to win new readers in your region — and send them in. Please send pictures too!



CHICAGO — Socialist workers who are members of the United Auto Workers (UAW) in Chicago sold 24 single issues of the March 9 *Militant* to co-workers in just one week. Most workers bought the paper for the coverage on the contract rejection by UAW workers at Caterpillar, as well as the coverage on Iraq.

Cappy Kidd



NEW YORK — Communist workers who are members of the United Transportation Union Local 1370 at Amtrak sold a total of eight copies of *New Internationalist* no. 7, with "The Opening Guns of World War III" and 16 single issues of the *Militant* to our co-workers in the month of February.

While workers wanted to discuss U.S. aggression against Iraq, quite a number thought that the visit by United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan signified that there would be no war. A number of workers who bought the *Militant* or *New Internationalist* during the month did so after a lot of discussion over a period of days or weeks.

Ruth Robinett, referring to sales of the *Militant* throughout the month explained, "Almost all my conversations began with workers saying, 'I think something has to be done about Hussein.' But as the discussion continued many workers expressed deep questions about the prospects of war and wanted to read what the *Militant* had to say. Some were already convinced that the coming war is 'about oil' and opposed it on this basis. A few objected outright to the U.S. government's arrogance in placing demands on Iraq, but most workers who bought the paper hadn't made up their mind and wanted to read a newspaper opposed to Washington's invasion plans."

A mechanic who bought the *New Internationalist* from socialist railworker Anna Schell referred to the U.S. government's syphilis experiments on Black men at Tuskegee as proof that Washington didn't really care about workers anywhere in the world.

One result of campaigning consistently against imperialism and war on the job is that a co-worker decided that he wanted to participate in taking this campaign to the streets and campuses. He has joined one or two sales teams a week during the last month.

Ellie Garcia



CLEVELAND — This week supporters of the socialist press sold 24 copies of the *Militant*. This includes six at Cleveland State University, six on community sales, and six at plant gates where other socialists work. Another single issue was sold at the picket line of the MSI strike in Marietta, Ohio. We will be back there next Sunday for a strike rally sponsored by the United Steelworkers of America.

Tony Prince

Campaigning against imperialism and war

February 1 - March 15 ♦ Target percentage for fifth week = 83%

	Militant		NI		Dual %	PM		Che	
	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold		Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA	195	153	5	0	39%	6	9	20	20
CANADA									
Vancouver	300	270	13	10	83%	8	6	20	12
Toronto	540	455	21	16	80%	8	4	20	14
Montreal	162	101	20	10	56%	21	13	20	6
Canada total	1002	826	54	36	75%	37	23	60	32
ICELAND	40	36	3	2	78%			5	5
NEW ZEALAND									
Auckland	150	140	5	4	87%		1	20	11
Christchurch	100	73	4	3	74%			14	12
Wellington	30	22	1	0	37%			2	1
NZ total	280	235	10	7	77%			36	24
SWEDEN	92	86	8	6	84%	10	4	8	7
UNITED KINGDOM									
London	270	336	25	15	92%			40	25
Manchester	240	158	10	8	73%			20	14
UK total	510	494	35	23	81%			60	39
UNITED STATES									
Los Angeles	500	449	40	41	96%	60	51	30	29
Boston	440	390	30	25	86%	20	25	25	16
Washington, DC	240	230	10	7	83%	12	8	20	12
Miami	300	247	32	24	79%	33	26	30	19
Des Moines	325	297	14	9	78%	30	27	17	13
Philadelphia	300	257	15	10	76%	10	3	25	15
New York	750	644	60	38	75%	90	72	100	42
San Francisco	360	272	36	26	74%	30	7	40	24
Atlanta	300	240	20	13	73%	30	22	30	23
Pittsburgh	200	149	13	9	72%	3	1	10	5
Detroit	200	165	10	5	66%	10	6	25	12
Birmingham, AL	200	170	15	7	66%	17	11	12	7
Seattle	200	151	20	11	65%	5	4	25	4
Cleveland	240	184	8	4	63%	8	5	20	10
Twin Cities, MN	330	270	25	11	63%	20	8	30	11
Newark, NJ	480	407	40	14	60%	80	15	30	7
Houston	228	177	15	5	55%	20	6	15	5
Chicago	600	450	25	8	54%	60	46	50	13
U.S. total	6193	5149	428	267	73%	538	343	534	267

In the Unions

AUSTRALIA									
AMWU	24	19	3		40%			4	
CANADA									
CAW	8	7	1	1	94%			1	
USWA	44	40	12	7	75%	6	4	8	
IAM	51	55	5	2	74%			4	1
UNITE	8		1		0%			1	
Canada total	111	102	19	10	72%	6	4	14	1
NEW ZEALAND									
MWU	16	13	1	0	41%			2	1
EU	20	15	2	0	38%			2	1
SFWU	4	2	1		25%				
NZ total	40	30	4	0	38%			4	2
UNITED KINGDOM									
TGWU	28	39	5	4	110%			5	1
RMT	16	13	3	2	74%			4	1
AEEU	20	18	4	1	58%			4	
UK total	64	70	12	7	84%			13	2
UNITED STATES									
OCAW	88	68	14	14	89%			16	4
IAM	160	150	35	28	87%	20	8	40	14
UFCW	32	21	7	7	83%	24	21	6	6
UAW	200	184	20	11	74%	7	11	30	15
UTU*	200	112	41	34	69%			28	11
UNITE	34	31	13	5	65%	22	23	16	11
USWA	175	87	40	13	41%	15	9	25	3
U.S. total	889	653	170	112	70%	88	72	161	64

* combined Militant and PM goal

Cities are ranked by the average percentage of *Militants* and *New Internationals* sold

AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AMWU — Amalgamated Manufacturers Union; CAW — Canadian Autoworkers Union; EU — Engineers Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage, and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; UNITE — Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union.

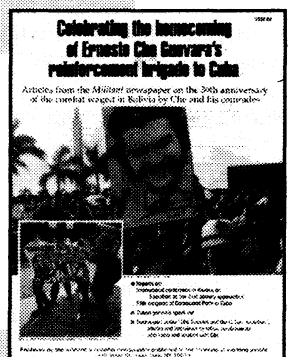
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High school students in Seattle protest racism

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 1573 N. Milwaukee, P.O. Box #478, Chicago, Ill. 60622. Tel: (773) 772-0551. Compuserve: 105162,605

BY AUTUMN KNOWLTON
AND KATE PORTER

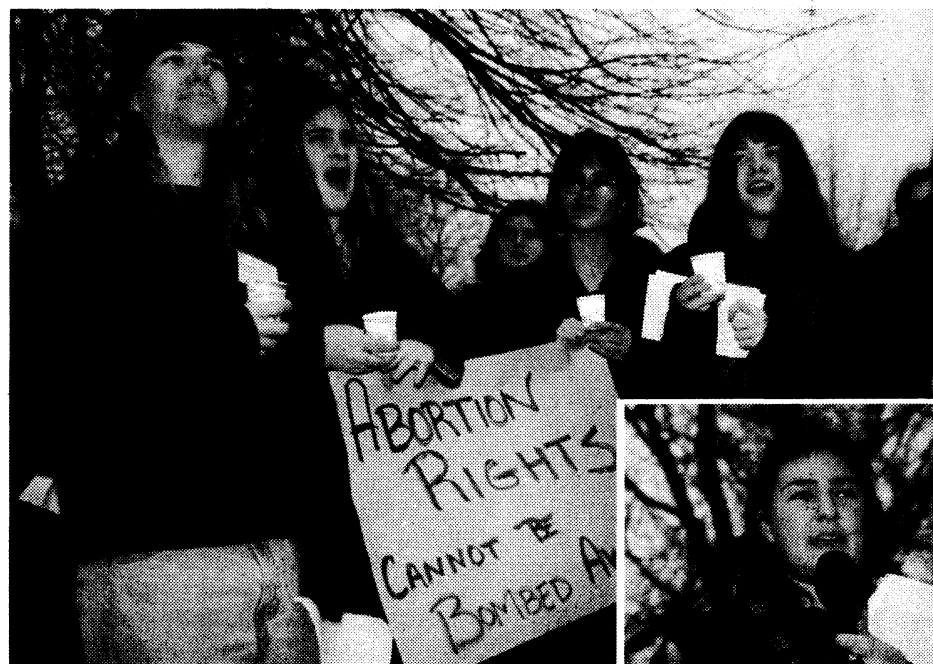
SEATTLE — On March 2, 35 students gathered on the steps of Roosevelt High School to protest racism in their school. The protest was organized by the Black Student Alliance (BSA). Among the organizations that attended were the BSA, the Pan African Student/Youth Movement, and the Young Socialists.

The students demanded to see the principal, who arranged to have a meeting with the group of students. They had met with the principal the previous week, but decided that it was necessary to call another meeting. At a meeting held after the rally, the

principal brought with him a cop and members of the school security. A spokesperson for the BSA presented the students' demands on the school administration.

One of the main complaints of the students is that while Black students are only 8 percent of the student population at Roosevelt, they are 40 percent of those expelled. Black students are commonly expelled based on the hearsay of other students. A number of Black students reported incidents in which their teachers openly insulted them and called them racial epithets in front of other students. A key issue in the discussion was the transfer of a special education teacher, who is Black, under the pretext that there was a greater need for him at another school in the district.

One of the demands of the Black Student Alliance is that an African history class be required for graduation. There is only one African-American literature class and no Black history classes. Out of 100 staff members at the school, only two are Black. The students also demanded that all expulsions and suspensions be evaluated by a human



Militant photos by Hilda Cuzco
Participants in Boston young feminist conference took part in a demonstration February 28 for women's rights, including the right to abortion. At right, Young Socialist Elena Tate addresses the rally.

rights review panel, composed of members of different nationalities on campus, to be trained by the Seattle Human Rights Commission. When asked what the youth plan

to do to change the situation for Black students at school, Ramon Curry, a member of BSA, stated, "The only way people get anything done is by demanding."

Hundreds discuss politics at young feminists summit

BY ANDREA MORELL

BOSTON — Behind a banner that declared, "Stop Clinic Violence — We Will Not Go Back!" participants in a Northeast Young Feminist Summit that took place in this city February 27 through March 1 marched and chanted in support of women's right to reproductive freedom and other demands. The conference, sponsored by the National Organization for Women, drew 800 youth, mainly high school and college students. Asked why she had come to the conference, Jessica Champaign from Yale University said, "I see myself as radical. I was feeling frustrated because the problems seemed so big. I was wondering how other people were tackling them."

George McKibbons, a student at Newton North High School near Boston and one of a score of young men who participated, described himself as a human rights activist. He said this summit is the first women's rights activity he has ever attended.

Before the march stepped off a rally was held celebrating the historical continuity of struggles for women's liberation. Elena Tate, a high school student and a member of the Young Socialists who was involved in planning the summit, told the crowd, "We are going to link up with struggles that have gone before for safe and legal abortion, the right of women to vote, with women in the civil rights movement."

NOW National President Patricia Ireland addressed one of the general sessions, hailing the recently concluded Winter Olympics as one of the most important events for women because of the achievements of female athletes, especially some on the U.S. team. The theme of feminism as doing one's "personal best" was sounded throughout the conference from the platform. The opening plenary featured Lynette Woodard, a basketball player and stockbroker, and Judge Nancy Gertner, a Clinton appointee to the federal bench.

Wide-ranging discussions took place in the many workshops. The International Women's Rights discussion drew more than 100 people to hear presentations by Wafaa' Salman, an Iraqi educator who has been speaking out against U.S. war moves in the Persian Gulf; Annette Kouri from Montreal, an activist in the struggle for Quebec independence; and Lois Reckett, a NOW leader and participant in the 1995 UN Women's Conference in Beijing.

Salman explained the consequences of the 1990-91 U.S.-led war against Iraq. "I call it the Gulf slaughter because that is what it was — thousands of civilians, mostly women and children, killed by the bombing," said Salman. "This is what the United States government is planning again." Her presentation sparked a wide discussion. When one participant asked whether something had to be done to overthrow the regime in Baghdad, Salman replied, "That is not the right of the U.S. to decide. Only the

Iraqi people can do that." Afterwards Salman was surrounded by youth wanting to continue the discussion, with several requesting she speak on their campuses. Two people bought copies of "Washington's Assault on Iraq: Opening Guns of World War III" in *New Internationalist*.

Panelists at the workshop on affirmative action presented a wealth of statistics illustrating women's underrepresentation in corporate board rooms and other positions. Responding from the floor to several people who asked how can affirmative action be fought for, Linda Marcus, a railroad conductor and socialist, received applause when she posed affirmative action as a way to overcome divisions among workers and youth

along race and gender lines.

At the workshop titled "High School Students Organize!" activists from two Massachusetts high schools described events they have organized that are aimed at raising women's sense of self-worth as human beings. These included educational programs to encourage women to get into sports to develop self-confidence; demanding curriculum changes to "write women back into history" and achieve math and science equality; and activities discouraging destructive diets young women go on for the sake of a false image of female beauty.

Two workshops took up experiences of discussing and fighting for women's rights in the workplace. Young Socialists from the

Northeast hosted a workshop to discuss the inter-twined battles for women's liberation and the fight against imperialism's march toward fascism and war, which 17 young people attended.

Thirty-four participants bought copies of the *Militant* and one subscribed. Seventeen Pathfinder titles were sold and 47 youth signed up to receive more information about the Young Socialists and their activities.

Andrea Morell is a member of the United Transportation Union Local 898 and the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 8th District. Olympia Newton, Nick Pell, Linda Marcus, and Mary Nell Bockman contributed to this article.

'Militant' editor speaks on Iraq at Harvard

BY GREG MCCARTAN

BOSTON — Twenty-five people turned out at Harvard University March 5 to hear *Militant* editor Naomi Craine speak on "Washington's War Drive Against Iraq." The event was sponsored by organizations hosting the Democracy Teach-In, a week of discussions, seminars, and events on culture, corporations, war, labor, environmental issues, women rights, and other political and social questions. Danny Paul Nelson, one of the teach-in organizers, said a meeting on Iraq was important, "because it is the clearest and most present example of U.S. abuse of its super-power status and the U.S. using violence to acquire raw materials around the globe to boost the corporate capitalist economy." Nelson chaired the event.

To understand why Washington is pursuing its course toward war in the Mideast and elsewhere, Craine said, it is necessary to see that "imperialism is a system where a tiny handful of super-rich individuals and families grow wealthy off the toil of workers and peasants around the world. Their plunder worldwide is an extension of their exploitation and oppression here in the U.S."

"But imperialism also creates its own gravediggers," she said, pointing to the decision by a majority of United Auto Workers members at Caterpillar to vote down a contract proposed by the company and the union's top officials. "Workers at CAT stood up with dignity and solidarity and struck a blow for all those who fight against exploitation, racism, oppression, and imperialist war," the *Militant* editor said.

Referring to the February 23 deal negotiated between United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan and the Iraqi government, Craine said the "so-called inspectors deal resolves nothing. On international television and before top Iraqi officials, Annan praised the U.S. and British governments for having shown a correct use of force," Craine said, "thus helping to establish a record of use of force to impose their will around the

world. The 'peace agreement' is a fraud."

Craine explained why the war drive is "aimed not only against Iraq but against the working people in the former Soviet Union, especially in Russia. The war drive is part of tightening the noose around the workers states with the aim of restoring capitalism."

"Workers in Russia are among those who 'broke the rules' U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright says everyone must follow," Craine said. "They broke the rules in 1917 by making a revolution and overturning the prerogatives of capital." This contention was the focus of the discussion period, as many participants in the meeting questioned the assertion that capitalism had not yet been reestablished across Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

"Following World War II," Craine said, "the U.S. rulers wanted to take back Russia and to turn back the Chinese revolution. But they were able to do neither, in part because of the U.S. GIs who mobilized and demanded to go home. Instead of the hot war they wanted, Washington had to settle for a 'Cold War,' and to see if, by isolating the Soviet Union, the Stalinist bureaucracy there could do the job for them."

With the collapse of these regimes at the start of the 1990s, she said, "Washington thought they had made enormous progress and could work with these wannabe-capitalist governments to rapidly bring back capitalism. But they are now realizing that is not the case. They have to convince working people in the workers states to accept a different social system — wage slavery. They cannot achieve that goal in a cold way; capitalism can only be returned through war against the working class," she said.

The occupation of Yugoslavia, the war drive against Iraq, and the expansion of NATO are all aimed at this goal, she said. "These plunderers are marching toward more wars. We need to oppose every move they make in violation of Iraqi sovereignty. The sanctions, the 'inspection teams,' and

the diplomacy are all part of their war moves," Craine said.

"The social force that can stop imperialist war once and for all is the working class," she said, "the same people who voted down the contract at CAT, those who are mobilizing in France and Germany demanding jobs, those who are fighting across Asia in response to the economic crisis of capitalism." Craine also pointed to the "coming into politics of working people in the workers states, such as the 250,000 health care workers who recently struck in Romania and the tens of thousands mobilizing in Kosovo for their national rights."

Members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists in Boston helped to build the meeting, and used the event as one way to continue to campaign against imperialism and its wars. Among those attending were Harvard students; a young immigrant worker interested in socialist politics who has been active in anti-war protests; and a subscriber to the *Militant* from Florida who had helped build protests there against the planned U.S. slaughter of the Iraqi people.

Participants in the meeting purchased six copies of the *Militant* and one of *New Internationalist* no. 7, featuring "Washington's War against Iraq: The Opening Guns of World War III," by Jack Barnes. Nine copies of the *Militant* were purchased from socialists at a literature table at Harvard during the day.

At a class on the lead article in *New Internationalist* no. 7 two days after Craine's meeting, five people new to the socialist movement participated along with YS and SWP members. Three students and workers who had joined a recent protest against Washington's war drive came to their first socialist event. Two purchased copies of the *New Internationalist*, while a third took a bundle of five *Militants* to sell to his friends.

Greg McCartan is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

Miami socialists join campus debate on U.S. war in Iraq

BY ANGEL LARISCY

MIAMI — "What has been the U.S. government's response to the UN/Baghdad accord? To pause? On the contrary, they are sending more troops, combat planes, and weapons to the Arab-Persian Gulf," said Janet Post, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidate for mayor of Miami in the last elections and a member of the International Association of Machinists. "There can be no reason for this except to plan for a bloody slaughter of the Iraqi people. The U.S./UN 'diplomacy' is part and parcel of the war drive," Post explained in her opening remarks at a debate February 26 entitled "Iraq vs. U.S." sponsored by the International Relations Association at Florida International University (FIU).

Over 150 students participated in a lively discussion at the event, which was organized in three days and held two days after the announcement of the deal between Iraq and the United Nations to continue weapons inspections. On the panel were four FIU professors, an Air Force lieutenant colonel, and two members of the Socialist Workers Party.

A few placards against war and the bombing of Iraq were held up in the audience of students, who in their large majority expressed reticence at the U.S. policy on Iraq.

"The United States is a world leader and can't abdicate its responsibility to act as one. We have significant national interests in the region and it is not stable," remarked Lt. Col. John Watkins, a national defense fellow at FIU and a commander of the 34th Air Force fighter squadron in Utah who participated in bombing raids on Iraq during the 1991 Gulf War. Watkins said he was an "implementer of military action regardless of my opinion," and noted the recent accord does not mean the crisis is over. "I expect to be back in the Gulf within six months."

Ron Cox, an associate professor in the political science department at FIU, said "What happened to the peace dividend?" referring to the expectation of a smaller military budget following the end of the Cold War. "The sanctions on Iraq are taking hundreds of thousands of lives," he continued, expressing his opinion that the sanctions don't hurt Iraqi president Saddam Hussein.

"The Gulf War ended seven years ago. Iraq is out of Kuwait. What threat is Iraq to us?" asked a student. Charles McDonald, an FIU professor and a fellow with the Naval War Academy answered, "The threat of Iraq is that we do believe Saddam has weapons of mass destruction."

Brad McGuinn of the international relations department said he thought "the existence of Saddam Hussein has provided a rational for U.S. presence in the region."

"Saddam Hussein is not a typical dictator; he's a qualitatively different entity," remarked Dr. Mesbahi, acting director of the Asia department at FIU. While saying he was opposed to U.S. intervention in the Mideast, Mesbahi also expressed the opinion that, "Saddam Hussein has become a conduit for disaster in the region."

"Our unequivocal demand should be 'U.S. out of the Middle East,'" countered Bill Kalman, a member of the United Transportation Union and representative of the SWP. "The U.S. government would like to set up a protectorate, a government to do their bidding in the region," he continued. "The real targets are the Iraqi and Palestinian people who continue to fight. Washington has no business exerting its will in the region," he concluded to applause from some audience members.

In response to one Arab student's query of why the regime in Israel can have weapons of mass destruction and the one in Iraq can't, and another student's calling attention to the U.S.'s support for dictators around the world, Watkins remarked, "The policies of the U.S. are imperfect; the policies of the U.S. are in some cases inequitable."

McDonald added, "There is a problem with hypocrisy in the area but we have to do the best we can."

Kalman noted, "There is no *we*. There are different political and economic interests

New York: 400 demand immigrant rights



Militant/Rose Ana Berbeo

About 400 people demonstrated in front of the Federal Building in New York February 19 to demand permanent U.S. residency for Salvadoran, Guatemalan, and Haitian refugees who came to the United States on or before Dec. 1, 1995. Miguel Ramirez, president of Centro Salvadoreño in Hempstead, Long Island, said that the U.S. immigration law passed last fall grants permanent residency to Nicaraguans and Cubans who arrived before or on the December 1995 deadline. He added that a national demonstration with the same demands will be held March 23 in Washington, D.C. According to a report released by the national cop force in El Salvador, at least 438 Salvadorans were deported from the United States in January 1998.

depending on what class you're a member of," he said. "The majority of us, working people, have no interest in imperialist war waged by our bosses and their government."

"With the obvious differences that have arisen between the United States and Russia on Iraq, do you see this as an isolated incident or a harbinger of what's to come?" asked an audience member. Mesbahi said he thought there wouldn't be much more criticism from Moscow against the U.S. war moves because the Russian government was "weak." Post responded, "The ultimate target of the U.S. military buildup is Russia. The United States wants to pull Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO as part of beginning to amass troops on the Russian border and attempt to use

military pressure to overthrow the workers state that still exists there."

The last question of the event was addressed in particular to Kalman. "You say you're for the sovereignty of the Iraqi people, but Saddam Hussein doesn't represent the interests of most Iraqis, so how can Iraq get a government that is for the poor and workers?" asked a young GI who had just returned from Bosnia.

"The working people of Iraq are quite capable of fighting for their own interests," the socialist rail worker replied, "of defending their country from imperialism and ultimately replacing the Hussein regime with a workers and farmers government ... the same kind of government we need to fight for in this country."

Irish nationalist speaks on fight against deportation from United States

BY JEFF POWERS

SEATTLE — "The first time I was arrested was when I was nine years old," Noel Cassidy told more than 30 people who attended the Militant Labor Forum here February 9. "I came from an Irish republican family and we were selling lilies to commemorate the Easter rising in 1916. We were charged with not having a permit."

Cassidy's talk was part of a four-day tour of Seattle and Portland, Oregon, where he had come to get support for his fight with the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Cassidy, along with nine other Irish nationals who support the republican movement, face deportation by the U.S. government.

In 1978 Cassidy was arrested and spent 23 months in Long Kesh prison convicted for possession of a document. "A piece of paper with names and addresses of members of the British army was allegedly found in my coat pocket by British intelligence," Cassidy said. "It was not in my handwriting and it was not there when I was first arrested even though my lining was cut out."

"It was a laughable charge and a laughable sentence," Cassidy explained. Several times Cassidy was offered his freedom if only he would plead guilty but he would not do it. "I was innocent," he said.

Cassidy went "on the blanket" when he arrived at Long Kesh. This campaign, organized by Irish republicans, was aimed at rebutting the British government's attempts to criminalize the struggle for Irish freedom by changing the status of republican inmates from political to criminal status. As part of this protest they refused to wear prison uniforms.

"I lived 23 months of my life completely naked. I didn't wash. I didn't shave. I didn't comb my hair. I urinated on the floor. There was defecation smeared on the walls," Cassidy said. He explained that the only way

to go to a toilet was to leave your cell. Any blanketman who did this was "severely beaten by the guards and subjected to cavity search of his rectum," Cassidy said.

To press for their demands the Irish republicans organized a hunger strike. "Ten people, including Bobby Sands, died during the hunger strike," Cassidy said.

In 1982, while the hunger strike was still going on, Cassidy was released from prison and he toured the United States to build support for the Irish prisoners' demands.

In the 1980s, Cassidy returned to Ireland but was unable to find work because of his politics. He immigrated here and is currently married to a U.S. citizen. He has a child here by a previous marriage.

In 1991, Cassidy was ordered deported by an immigration judge. "The British government put pressure on the U.S. There was a false Interpol report claiming I was in the IRA [Irish Republican Army]," Cassidy said.

In August of this year Cassidy will be back before an immigration judge fighting his conviction of illegal entry into the coun-

try.

"I believe that all ten of us facing deportation are being held hostage to the peace process in Ireland," Cassidy explained. "This is something we have no control over. If the negotiations do not go well, we will suffer."

Cassidy lives near Cleveland, Ohio, where he works as a painter and decorator. He also teaches Irish-language classes at a neighborhood community center, a local high school, and Oberlin College. "In some ways this is blessing," Cassidy said. "For the first time in years I have been able to go out and do what I like to do best — speak about politics."

From Seattle, Cassidy planned to go to Chicago and San Francisco. Supporters of his case can send donations to: Friends of Noel Cassidy, c/o Jack Kilroy, 2630 Joseph street, Avon, OH 44011.

Over \$200 was raised for his defense at the Seattle Militant Labor Forum.

Jeff Powers is a member of the United Transportation Union Local 845.

350 Pennsylvania Steelworkers strike

BY EDWIN FRUIT

UNIONTOWN, Pennsylvania — Some 350 members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) who work at Sensus Technology went on strike on March 2.

According to the Uniontown *Herald-Standard*, Calvin Croftcheck, president of USWA Local 13836, said that the company claimed it could not come to the bargaining table any sooner than 10 weeks from now.

At the picket line workers told the *Militant* that the main issues were wages, pensions, and "more respect" by management. Sensus has offered an 11.9 percent wage increase over a five-year period. Pickets said this was an insult compared to the profits the company was making. One of the women strikers said that some 75 percent of the workforce was composed of women and that the last strike had lasted seven weeks in 1979. Croftcheck told the *Herald-Standard* that he had contacted the Teamsters and the United Mine Workers of America "who have told us they will stand shoulder to shoulder with us." Pickets also reported that United Parcel Service and other Teamster organized truckers were refusing to make deliveries.

Edwin Fruit is a member of International Association of Machinists Local Lodge 1976 in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania.

Available from Pathfinder

On the Irish Freedom Struggle

By Bernadette Devlin McAliskey

McAliskey describes how the U.S. civil rights movement influenced fighters for self-determination in Ireland, and explains how British imperialism's war abroad are an extension of its attacks against workers in Britain. \$2.00

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Bernadette Devlin McAliskey



Student rallies in Egypt protest U.S. imperialism

Continued from front page

interviewed on March 9 outside Cairo University and American University who themselves had not taken part in the protests, voiced a similar anti-imperialist defiance.

"The first large demonstration started at the Arabic Language and Islamic Sciences faculty on February 20," said Bhaa El Din El Mola, a student at that department of Cairo University. "About 2,000 students, mainly Muslim, left their classes and began marching. Soon the protest grew and got broader."

As the word about the action swept the campus, many more quit class and joined in, chanting: "Stop the bombing," "U.S. hands off Iraq!" and "Don't stick your nose in our internal affairs!" Up to 4,000 demonstrated that day, according to El Mola.

Mustaffa and other students said the Islamic Association was the student group that initiated the action. In less than a day most student organizations at Cairo University — including the Democracy Movement, Nasserism, and the Progressive Current — threw their support behind the mobilizations.

Gamal Abdel Nasser was the former Egyptian president whose regime carried out extensive nationalizations beginning in the 1950s, including the 1956 expropriation of the Suez Canal, which sparked a British, French, and Israeli invasion of Egypt and massive popular mobilizations throughout the Arab world.

Prior to the protests, several student groups had set up a photo exhibition depicting the devastating effects of the seven-year-old United Nations embargo against Iraq, pushed and policed by Washington.

A high percentage of Palestinians and students from Jordan took part in the actions, relative to their numbers at Cairo University, said Mustaffa and Ahmed, a medical student there who asked to be identified only with his first name. Palestinian flags dotted the crowd of protesters and slogans demanding an end to U.S. support to the Tel Aviv regime could be heard throughout the mobilizations, which lasted for five days, ending February 24.

"Clinton and [U.S. secretary of state Madeleine] Albright talk about stopping proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to rationalize their crimes against Iraq," Ahmed said. "But they are the biggest

proliferators. They are the ones who have poured weapons of mass destruction into Israel and have now filled the Persian Gulf with warships, bombers, and nuclear weapons."

Actions on other campuses

Similar actions took place at other campuses February 20–24. The largest mobilization, of more than 30,000, took place at Aim Shams (Eye of the Sun) University February 22, according to journalist Sameh El Shall and most students interviewed by the *Militant*. About 10,000 students demonstrated at El Azhar and Zhaka Zhik universities in Cairo, we were told, and smaller actions of 2,000–3,000 took place in Alexandria and other Egyptian cities.

About 100 students from American University, a smaller private college in the center of Cairo, left their classes February 22 and marched through the campus and then toward the nearby U.S. embassy, chanting "Stop the bombing!"

"By the time we got to the U.S. embassy we numbered over 1,000," said Ramy, an 18-year-old computer science student, who asked that his last name not be used. "It was spontaneous. No particular student organization called us to go out. We just heard the United States was about to start the bombing. We are Arabs. We must act."

Most students on that campus come from upper middle-class or bourgeois families. Tuition fees there exceed \$9,000 a year, double the annual income of a well-paid industrial worker.

Several of the students *Militant* reporters interviewed on that campus were clearly not opposed to U.S. imperialism or to the efforts by Washington and its imperialist allies to deepen their domination of the Middle East. But even those students were against Washington's impending military assault, echoing the position of the Egyptian government. "Getting access to some presidential palaces is a lousy excuse for war," said Khalid Mustaffa, another computer science student at American University who did not participate in the February 22 demonstration. "At least in 1991 they had a good excuse," he added, referring to the invasion of Kuwait by the Iraqi army in 1990 that the U.S. government used as the pretext to organize the slaughter against the Iraqi people



Palestinians in Jordan demonstrate against U.S. war moves in September of 1990

at the time.

Attitude of Egyptian authorities

The action at American University was the only one the police did not interfere with. At all the other universities, which are public, the cops forced the students to stay within the confines of the campus or the immediate vicinity of the school.

Ahmed and other students interviewed outside Cairo University said protesters filled the city street running through the middle of the campus, but were prevented from marching into the city by the cops. "The government in this case particularly wanted to prevent the march from reaching the Israeli embassy a few blocks away," he said. "But compared to 1990–91, when two students were killed in clashes with police, the political gulf between the students and the authorities was narrower."

The Egyptian government backed the U.S.-led assault on Iraq in 1991, but distanced itself from Washington's war preparations this time, calling instead for negotiations with Baghdad and a diplomatic solution to the crisis. This was a common stance among the governments across North Africa. Over the last four months, editorials in the big-business press here have often criticized or condemned Washington's war preparations against Iraq and the U.S.-initiated embargo, as well as sanctions maintained against Libya.

"The way the West, particularly the U.S., has been handling the Arabs over the past few years, especially in the aftermath of Gulf War II, reinforces the Arab misgivings over the thrust of the New World Order," said the lead editorial in the March 9 *Egyptian Gazette*, the main English-language daily in Egypt. (Gulf War II is the common term used in the press here to describe the 1991 U.S.-led assault on Iraq. Gulf War I designates the Iraq-Iran war of the 1980s.) "Plain and

simple, the Arabs have every reason to believe that the sanctions are an arbitrary weapon only wielded against them and on unfair grounds. Any perceived failure to toe the American line risks the wrath of the U.S., which could in turn lead to tightening the noose around this or that state and stigmatizing it as a pariah country."

The editorial focused on condemning the most recent UN Security Council decision to renew sanctions against Libya because of Tripoli's refusal to extradite two of its nationals to Britain or the United States, whom Washington and London claim are responsible for planting a bomb in a Pan Am airliner that exploded in midair over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988. The UN Security Council decision came shortly after a February 28 ruling by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that it has jurisdiction over where a trial of the accused should take place, as well as to hear Libyan complaints of Washington's and London's actions in this case, which Tripoli hailed as a victory in its fight against the sanctions. "This week's Security Council move to retain the sanctions for a further four months makes a mockery of the ICJ decision and adds to the growing Arab cynicism over the U.S.-led New World Order," the *Egyptian Gazette* editorial said.

While the anti-imperialist actions were concentrated on campuses, smaller protests also took place elsewhere. Mohammed Abdel Rahman, a novelist, said 1,200 writers and other artists marched in solidarity with the student actions.

Where protesters focused their fire on the policies of the Egyptian government of Hosni Mubarak, they faced harsher treatment by the police. Mohammed Abdel Zaher, a student at Al Azhar University, said about 50 students began an impromptu march February 13, during the Cairo Book Fair, that quickly grew to 300 people and drew the attention of the press. Protesters demanded an end to the UN sanctions against Iraq, opposed U.S. military intervention, and called for severing economic relations between Egypt and Israel. Zaher said cops attacked the demonstrators, beating two students unconscious.

Similarly, when thousands of people, many of them workers, who had congregated at the El Azhar mosque attempted to march down the street February 20 against Washington's announced plans to bomb Iraq, they faced heavy police cordons. The cops prevented the outpouring by roughing up many people.

Since the UN "deal" with Iraq, protests have receded. But most students and others interviewed by the *Militant* said they expect hostilities will resume. "I think the U.S. government will try this again," said Mohammed Abdel Rahman, who is also an officer of the newly formed Egyptian Committee to Confront American and Zionist Threats Against the Peoples of the Middle East. "The United States and Israel have great interests in the region because from here they can reach the oil-rich areas of the former Soviet republics and thereby control the oil that Russia, China, and Japan depend on. Some day they will pay dearly for trying to plunder every corner of the world," Ahmed said, referring to Washington. "We will fight them."

Maxi Ortiz is a member of the Young Socialists in Stockholm, Sweden. Maria Isabel Le Blanc, a member of the Young Socialists in Montreal, Quebec, contributed to this article.

Berkeley campus hosts 'Dialogue with Cuba'

BY NORTON SANDLER

BERKELEY, California — Some 30 participants from Cuba have been invited to "A Dialogue with Cuba," a conference hosted by the University of California here March 19–21. They include prominent academics and scientists, artists, entertainers, journalists, athletes, trade unionists, university students, and deputies from Cuba's National Assembly of Peoples Power, as well as representatives of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C. The conference is sponsored by the University of California at Berkeley itself, the office of University Chancellor Robert M. Berdahl, and numerous university departments.

At a news conference held on campus March 10, Ling-chi Wang, chairman of the Department of Ethnic Studies, said that the Cuban invitees were selected by various university departments who are paying their expenses to attend. These departments have also invited academics and others from the U.S. to participate in the conference panels and plenary sessions.

The main sessions will include "A Framework for a U.S./Cuba Dialogue," "Race, Racism, and Society," "U.S.-Cuba Relations," "The Sociology of Sport," and "Democracy, Elections, and People's Power."

Among the Cubans invited are Gisela Arandia from the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba; Alfonso Chao Chiu, president of the Chung Wah Casino (Chi-

nese Benevolent Association); Olga Fernández Ríos, director of the Institute of Philosophy, Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment; filmmaker Gerardo Chijona; Julio César Guanche, member of the national secretariat of the Federation of University Students; Jorge Ruiz, director of Radio Havana's English-language section; and Ramón Crespo, national secretary of the Cuban Health Workers Union. The conference will be opened with a concert March 19 at the Berkeley Community Theater including well-known Cuban singer Carlos Varela and an Afro-Cuban jazz ensemble featuring Pancho Quinto and other entertainers. Cuban poet Nancy Morejón and U.S. writer Alice Walker will read from their works.

According to Wang the U.S. State Department has approved visas to travel to the conference for 8 conference invitees from Cuba, but denied visas to 11 others. They will be joined by Fernando Remírez de Estenoz, who heads the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C. Eleven musicians taking part in the cultural event have received U.S. visas. None of the those invited who are associated with Cuba's National Assembly or other governmental bodies have been granted visas, including Alberto Juantoreno, the vice president of Cuba's National Institute of Sport; Carlos Fernández de Cossio, chief of the North American Section of the Cuba's Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and

Sergio Arce, secretary general of the Latin American and Caribbean Christian Conference on Peace. "Because the dialogue will be academic, free, and open," Wang stated, "it should have the blessing of our government, the U.S. Department of State, a prerequisite for securing timely visas for our invited scholars and professionals to come to Berkeley. We trust that our government will not use the visa approval process to impose censorship and stifle free expression and exchange of ideas."

He added that the conference organizers are mobilizing support from throughout the nine-campus University of California system to aid in the effort to obtain visas for the remaining Cuban invitees. The Cuban participants are making themselves available to visit other area campuses for a couple of days before the conference and a few days afterward. The conference is free to students. Registration for other participants will be \$20. The opening concert costs \$15 for students and \$20 general admission.

For more information on the "Dialogue with Cuba," contact the Department of Ethnic Studies, 506 Barrows Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-2570. Telephone (510) 643-0796. E-mail LULYFL36@unclink2.berkeley.edu.

Norton Sandler is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 1781. Mary Lou Montauk contributed to this article.

Textile workers in Atlanta donate Pathfinder books to Cuban factory

The *Militant* has promoted the Books for Cuba Fund over the last several years. This fund allows workers and young people in the United States and elsewhere to contribute money to buy Pathfinder books to be donated to libraries, universities, and factories in Cuba. An appeal at the start of this year raised more than \$4,000 to meet requests for book donations around the time of the Havana book fair in February. The exchange of letters below describes one such contribution by a group of workers in Atlanta.

Contributions to the Books for Cuba Fund can be made payable to the *Militant*, earmarked Books for Cuba Fund, and sent to the *Militant* at 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

January 29, 1998
Mary-Alice Waters
Pathfinder Press
New York

Dear Ms. Waters,

There are seven co-workers at Wilen Manufacturing, a mop factory and warehouse in Atlanta, Georgia, who are donating \$25.00 to the Books for Cuba Fund. We have selected *Habla Malcolm X* [Malcolm X speaks] and *La segunda declaración de La Habana* [The second declaration of Havana] as the two books we would like to contribute to the Fund.

We would enjoy learning who you gave these books to and as much about them as you can tell us.

A little bit about us. Our names are Peggy Molden, Brenda McMillan, Corey Allen, David Wareham, Rickey Johnson, Paul Cornish, and Arlene Rubinstein. The plant is organized by the United Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) Local 2625. By the time you receive this note our contract will have expired. We are currently in negotiations, and will have to fight for everything that we get.

All seven of us have purchased Pathfinder books and have been discussing them on the job. Looking forward to any information that you may bring back so we can share the ideas with each other.

Sincerely,
Paul Cornish

January 30, 1998
Paul Cornish
College Park, Georgia

Dear Paul,

Thank you for the note about the books that you and your co-workers at Wilen are donating to the Books for Cuba Fund. I know we will be able to make a special gift of them to one of the factories we visit, and that they will be much appreciated. The fact that they come from fellow workers in the United States, and that we can tell them a little about the struggles you are in the midst of, is the most important thing.

When we return, we will let you know how they were used.

Once again, many thanks and we hope you are strong and united and fight well in your contract negotiations.

Best regards,
Mary-Alice Waters
Pathfinder

February 28, 1998
Paul Cornish
College Park, Georgia

Dear Paul,

I'm a meatpacker in Detroit and a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union. Together with two other workers, I had the pleasure of delivering the donation of Pathfinder books that you and your co-workers sent to fellow workers in Cuba. Our delegation also included Maria Isabel Le Blanc, a Quebecois worker in Montreal, Canada, who is currently recovering from injuries suffered on a previous industrial job and plans to get a job in garment when she's able to do so. Maria Isabel was one of the volunteers who staffed the Pathfinder stand at the Havana International Book Fair. In addition, Francisco Picado, a former garment worker in Miami and New York (among other cities), who was in Havana preparing a number of news articles for the *Militant* and the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, was part of our group.

At the invitation of SNTIL, the union of the light industry workers, we were able to visit El Quitrín, a clothing factory in Habana Vieja (Old Havana). It is a small shop with 81 workers — 70 women and 11 men. This is a special garment shop, one that makes traditional Cuban dresses. Each worker sews the whole garment as opposed to an assembly line, which is the norm in Cuba as elsewhere. There is a store next to the factory where they sell what they produce. Most are sold to tourists, which brings in hard currency to buy raw materials and keep production going.

We were received by Faustina Pedro, the Havana province secretary of the Light Industry Union; Lidia Betancourt, the plant administrator; and Fernando Huesa, general secretary of the union local and a cutter in the plant. We got a royal tour and were able to talk to all the workers about the books you donated and who you were. We took advantage of the opportunity to speak about some of the attacks unionists and working

revolutionaries, he states, "continues to be a clear alternative not only to capitalism, but also to the failed experiences of Eastern Europe and the USSR."

Balaguer also discusses a number of other points of debate within the workers movement around the world. These include the centrality of the fight for state power; the need for alliances based on advancing the struggles of working people; and why the Cuban revolution is stronger, not weaker, as a result of the Special Period.

Among the other articles in the latest issue are "Economic Globalization from the Standpoint of Marxist Theory" by Julia Matilde Campos and "Globalization: Is It an Alternative Course for the Capitalist System, or Its Destiny?" by Osvaldo Martínez and Faustino Cobarrua.

The Communist Party of Cuba's journal was published previously in 1961-67 and 1981-90. The third series began in 1996.

Individual subscriptions to *Cuba Socialista* are \$28 per year, library subscrip-

people in general face in the United States. Fernando spoke for the workers at the plant expressing their pleasure at receiving the books from fellow workers in the United States. He told Francisco he was sure he would not be the only person who wanted to get on the list to read them.

Workers in this plant have been selected as "National Vanguard" for six consecutive years because of their success in meeting the plant's productivity goals and their ability to meet other targets they set for themselves through their union. These include financing union activities and the voluntary donation of a day's wages during the year to help arm the union-supported Territorial Troop Militia, which defends the revolution. As you probably know, 40 years ago this year workers and peasants overthrew a bloody dictatorship that was backed by the United States and began the fight to build socialism under the constant attacks of the U.S. government.

Their efforts over the last several years are noteworthy because of the difficulties and shortages Cubans have faced, especially since the early 1990s, when they lost their long-standing source of raw materials and trade agreements with the Soviet Union. The U.S. government economic embargo has cruelly exacerbated this by preventing them from negotiating new trade pacts. For example, having to deal with daily blackouts in past years because of oil shortages, workers at El Quitrín and other garment factories adapted their sewing machines with pedals so they could continue to work. These blackouts do not happen anywhere near as often now, so they have changed half of their machines back to normal and project fixing



Workers at El Quitrín garment factory in Old Havana, Cuba.

the rest as they continue to restore previous productivity levels. The plant administration has not been able to replace a number of incandescent light bulbs, we noticed, because they do not have any. They have to be bought with hard currency.

During the "Special Period," as Cubans called this crisis they have been fighting to put behind them, production in the plant dropped by 40 percent because of shortages of materials and other problems. They have been making progress in the past couple of years especially; production has increased by 7 percent and 6 percent respectively. The plant was the cleanest garment factory any of us had been in — from bathrooms to their outdoor lunch room (where the plant provides lunch for the workers) to the neatly stacked materials on the production floor.

To get access to badly needed convertible currency in order to buy the raw materials, spare parts, and other items they need to keep production going, the plant sells 60 percent of its production in the dollar market and 40 percent in the national market. (Most Cubans do not have access to dollars, although the number who do is growing.) The union leadership said that a special effort is made to use every piece of material available to produce garments that are affordable for workers in the national market. In the Special Period, workers have decided to take many steps with the aim of increasing production. Management has adopted a schedule proposed by the workers that enables them to meet the production goals and at the same time gives workers all Saturdays and Sundays off. As in the United States though, garment workers are among the lowest paid workers in the country.

Conditions remain difficult in Cuba. Because of the U.S. embargo, it is hard for people to get many medicines, and meat is not a regular part of everyone's diet. This is especially true for those who have no access to dollars. On the other hand, there is a tremendous spirit of solidarity among workers, and through their collective effort production has begun to recover in many areas, transportation is better than in years past, and the overall food situation has greatly improved compared to a few years ago. People fight hard not to lose what the revolution has made it possible to achieve in the past and to improve on it where possible. Like all workers in Cuba, the workers at El Quitrín can retire at 55 if they are women and 60 if they are men. There is no limit on sick days, and medical care is free. Workers who are forced to miss work because of a child's illness do not face reprimands. This is a far cry from our experience in the United States.

I hope this little report is useful. For us it was a privilege to be able to deliver the books you donated and share the appreciation expressed to us. If you and your co-workers would like to do so, you can write to the union at this plant care of Fernando Huesa, Secretario SNTIL, El Quitrín, e/San Ignacio y Obispo, La Habana, Cuba.

In solidarity,
Rosa Greenwood

Pathfinder to distribute 'Cuba Socialista'

BY MIKE TABER

Pathfinder has announced it will begin distributing *Cuba Socialista* (Socialist Cuba), the Spanish-language journal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. *Cuba Socialista* addresses many of the challenges facing the Cuban revolution today, as well as topics under debate among revolutionary forces around the world. The 64-page journal is published four times a year.

The final issue in 1997 includes "Socialism: A Viable Option" by José Ramón Balaguer. This was the inaugural speech, on behalf of the Communist Party of Cuba, to the October 1997 conference in Havana entitled "Socialism as the 21st Century Approaches." That gathering was attended by delegations from 97 parties and political organizations from around the world.

Balaguer explains in the talk how the fight for socialism is the only realistic perspective for the toilers in today's world. The model of socialism looked to by Cuban

tions are \$40 per year. In addition to individual subscriptions, *Cuba Socialista* will be available at Pathfinder bookstores around the world, with a suggested cover price of \$7.50 per issue.

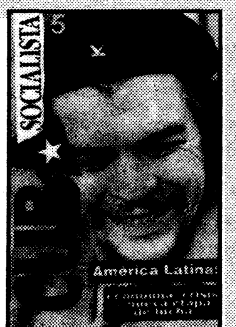
Distribution of this magazine complements Pathfinder's line of titles on the Cuban revolution by Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Joseph Hansen, Mary-Alice Waters, and others. *Cuba Socialista* will join two other publications from Cuba that Pathfinder distributes: *Granma Internacional*, the weekly newspaper published in English, Spanish, and French; and *La Gaceta de Cuba*, the bi-monthly magazine of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC).

Available from Pathfinder

Cuba Socialista

Takes up many of the challenges facing the Cuban revolution today, as well as topics under debate among revolutionary forces around the world. Published in Spanish four times a year by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba.

Individual subscriptions, \$28; library rate \$40.



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EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

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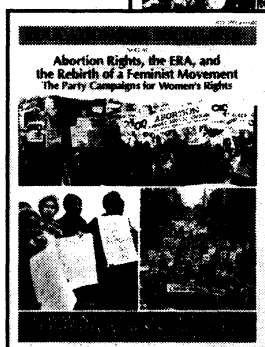
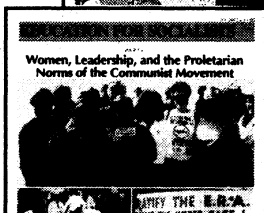
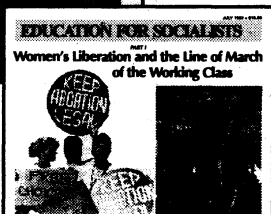
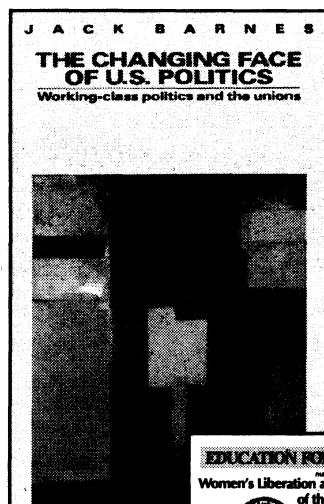
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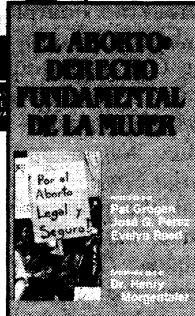
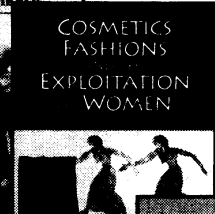
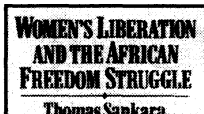
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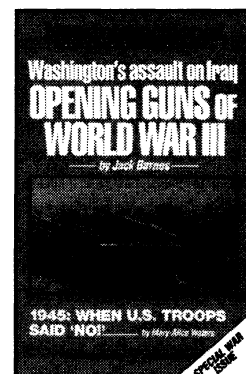


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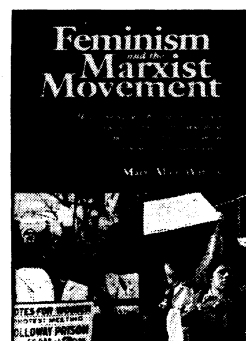
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Maple Leaf workers in Canada end strike

Continued from front page

and other kids who come later. My heart's not for sale," declared Tony Hovevar at the picket shack after the vote results were announced. Hovevar voted against the buyout deal.

About 75 workers gathered for hours that night outside the plant. Fires burned at several gates as workers discussed and debated the results. Many were angry. Some were silent. Most of the workers *Militant* reporters met voted no on the contract. "He's like a scrooge. But the three ghosts haven't visited him yet," said Ken Merrick.

Mario Roque has worked in the plant for more than 23 years. "The company bought the votes," Roque said. "It's not easy for everybody, mostly because everyone's financially desperate." Some of the strikers have already had their houses foreclosed on by the banks. There are many couples working at the plant which makes things more difficult. Maple Leaf is Burlington's largest employer.

Many workers said that the concessions would now set a trend in the industry and potentially have an impact on other industries. "This is a great day for the industry in eastern Canada," said company executive vice president Pat Jones. "We now have a cost-competitive plant." Throughout the strike Maple Leaf bosses waged an expen-

sive media campaign arguing they had to lower labor costs to compete with pork producers in the United States.

One worker, with six years on the job, who did not want to be named, said he voted for the contract and has another job. He won't be returning to Maple Leaf. He believes working conditions will be hell in there now.

The day before the vote, about 450 workers attended a union meeting where the negotiating committee urged a "No" vote on the contract. UFCW members from the locked-out locals at Maple Leaf plants in Stoney Creek, Ontario, and North Battleford, Saskatchewan, spoke at the meeting urging the Burlington local to vote No.

After the union meeting there was a rally of 300 people on the Burlington picket line where a busload of Stoney Creek UFCW members came to bolster those who were opposed to a concession contract by wearing vests that said, "Vote No. My union's not 4 sale." Gayle Stenrud, a laborer on the bacon line from the Saskatchewan plant said, "I'm here bringing solidarity from the locked-out Saskatchewan local and say the buyout offer is a real slap in the face."

In the weeks leading up to the vote, discussions on the picket lines were widespread on how to strengthen the strike. Many workers expressed the opinion that union offi-



Some 200 United Food and Commercial Workers members and supporters rallied February 22 in Hamilton, Ontario, in solidarity with the strikers at Maple Leaf.

cials had conceded too much to the company — allowing meat and equipment out of the plant after the picket lines went up. The equipment is being used to process pork in other facilities.

The discussions continued at the fire barrels after the vote on whether or not this fight could have been won. Some workers thought the plant should have been occupied. Others thought the McCain family, which heads one of the biggest food empires in Canada, was simply too big to defeat. There were many discussions on how the entire labor

movement needed to bring its weight to bear on the strike in order to win. "I'll tell you one thing," insisted Roque. "If there's ever a plant, big or small, no matter where, that goes on strike, I will support them."

Workers will probably begin returning to work in two to three weeks.

Susan Berman is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 5338. John Steele, a member of the International Association of Machinists, and Rosemary Ray contributed to this article.

Sinn Fein representative meets with youth groups

BY ANNE HOWIE
AND JACK WILLEY

CAIRO, Egypt — On March 8, the day following an international meeting evaluating the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students held in Havana last July and August, more than 20 representatives of youth organizations from around the world participated here in an informal meeting with Mark McLeanan, a representative of Sinn Fein, to discuss the Irish freedom struggle and Sinn Fein's assessment of last summer's festival. That was the first youth festival Sinn Fein had participated in.

McLeanan, who works in the Sinn Fein press office in Belfast, Northern Ireland, had come to Cairo to participate in the evaluation meeting of the festival, but due to a long flight delay, arrived after it had ended. Rasheed Ali, General Secretary of the World Federation of Democratic Youth and leader of the Sudanese Youth Union, chaired the gathering and introduced the Sinn Fein representative.

McLeanan opened with greetings on be-

half of Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams. He gave a brief history of the Irish freedom struggle, tracing the roots of the Republican movement to the United Irishmen, an organization that fought at the end of the 18th century against British domination of Ireland. He spoke about the civil rights movement by Catholics that exploded in the late 1960s in the northern six counties of Ireland, which are under direct British domination.

In reviewing some of the recent developments in Ireland, McLeanan explained how the inclusion of Sinn Fein in the all-party peace talks organized by the British government is the product of the rise in the Irish struggle. He also denounced Westminster's February 20 expulsion of Sinn Fein from the talks on the pretext of unsubstantiated claims that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) was responsible for two recent shootings.

During the question and answer period, the representative of the Tudeh Party of Iran said he considered Sinn Fein the political wing of the IRA and asked about the rela-

tionship between the two groups. McLeanan replied, "The IRA is a guerrilla army and Sinn Fein is a political party. They are two separate organizations that share the same analysis of the Irish struggle, but neither dictates policy to the other." Sinn Fein represents the majority of people fighting for an Irish republic. This was reflected in the last election in the northern counties in which Sinn Fein received 100,000 votes, he said. Sinn Fein is also gaining strength in the Irish Republic. For the first time in 15 years, a Sinn Fein member won a seat in the Irish parliament last year.

Anne Howie, of the Communist League in the United Kingdom talked about the impact the advances in the Irish struggle have had in the working class in Britain and elsewhere. In the last few years, she said, there's growing openness in the trade unions and work places to discuss the Irish struggle and England's history of colonial domination. The ability of Sinn Fein leaders to travel and the breaking down of media censorship are further reflections of this.

In response to a question about the effects of British imperialism on youth in Ireland, McLeanan said the most damning legacy of imperialism in Ireland is reflected in the massive emigration of young people out of Ireland, to Britain and all over the world. He dubbed this migration "Ireland's biggest export."

Asked by Leyde Rodríguez of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba about the recent youth festival, McLeanan said Sinn Fein saw the event as an opportunity to get a wider hearing for the Irish freedom struggle. Included in their delegation to the Havana festival was Gerry Kelly, a central leader of Sinn Fein and a veteran of Long Kesh prison, where many Irish political prisoners are held. Kelly spoke at the anti-imperialist tribunal in Havana, one of the main political events of the festival, attended by more than 1,400 delegates. Festival participants submitted evidence to the tribunal of the crimes of U.S., British and other imperialist powers. Kelly explained the history and legacy of British domination of Ireland.

In addition, Sinn Fein had met with a wide range of organizations from around the world, McLeanan said, and has kept links with them in the months since. Participants in the meeting with McLeanan came from Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Cuba, Egypt, Germany, Iran, Iraq, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Sudan, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Vietnam.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Sinn Fein representative invited the organizations present to attend the forthcoming Ard Fheis, the national conference of Sinn Fein scheduled for April.

U.S./UN 'weapons inspectors' create new provocations in Iraq

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Scott Ritter, the UN "weapons inspector" who was barred from Iraq in January after being accused of working as a spy, is back on the job organizing provocative violations of Iraqi sovereignty. Ritter, a U.S. Marine intelligence officer during the 1991 Gulf War, organized "surprise visits" to a number of locations in Iraq March 6.

At the same time, Washington has continued its U-2 spy flights over Iraq. Other U.S. provocations include UN "inspectors" barging into private quarters unannounced. The United Nations Security Council had approved a resolution March 2 that demands "immediate and full compliance by Iraq without conditions or restrictions."

Earlier this year Baghdad blocked a group of "weapons inspectors" led by Ritter from entering Iraqi intelligence headquarters. Washington used this provocation as a pretext for escalating its war preparations against Iraq.

Moscow and Washington are disputing the composition of the "weapons inspectors" commission, with Russian officials saying a Russian should be appointed co-deputy chairman of the UN special commission. U.S. ambassador William Richardson expressed "serious reservations" about the idea. Baghdad is urging the inclusion of inspectors from more countries, saying it is

dominated by U.S. and British officials. London is the only other permanent member of the Security Council that supports the Clinton administration's claims that it has the authority to use force unilaterally under the UN resolutions passed during Washington's 1990-91 assault on Iraq.

UN secretary general Kofi Annan warned that if Baghdad violated the deal allowing unlimited access for the UN inspectors that he brokered last month with President Saddam Hussein, "it would be much easier to get agreement in the council to take military action." With its finger on the trigger, Washington is keeping 36,000 troops, 400 warplanes, and dozens of ships primed to strike Iraq.

Senate prepares for NATO expansion

The U.S. Senate is preparing to approve the eastward expansion of NATO up to the borders of Russia and the former Soviet republics of Ukraine and Belarus. On March 3 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 16-2 to add the regimes of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into the imperialist military alliance.

Founded in 1949, the U.S.-dominated North Atlantic Treaty Organization was organized to exert maximum economic and military pressure on the Soviet Union and other workers states, crush the struggles of

workers and peasants around the world, and codify Washington's dominance in Europe.

"Russia's attitude toward NATO enlargement has been and remains unequivocally negative," stated Yuli Vorontsov, Russia's ambassador to the United States, in an opinion piece published in the March 10 *Washington Post*. "Naturally, we do not expect a NATO attack now. But NATO is a military alliance, its military machine is getting closer to the boundaries of Russia — mind you, a military machine not university centers. Strictly speaking, a Polish tank, even if it is a Soviet-made T-72, automatically becomes a NATO tank after that country joins the Alliance. Whether we want to or not, we shall be obliged to react to these developments if the process goes on," he added.

Vorontsov referred to U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright, who told the Senate committee hearing on NATO expansion, "there are still questions about the future of Russia."

She said the three prospective NATO members "are already behaving as loyal allies" and "if we have to take military action they will be with us."

Vorontsov asserted that "a negative attitude toward enlargement" is expressed by "an almost 100 percent consensus in Russian public opinion."

Coming Next Week

Militant reporters Argiris Malapanis and Jack Willey are en route to Kosovo. As this issue was going to press, we received a fax from Yugoslavia, a feature article on the March 5-6 meeting of the General Council of the World Federation of Democratic Youth held in Cairo and the related meeting the following day of youth organizations from around the world to evaluate the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students held last year in Cuba. That coverage will be featured in our next issue, along with coverage from Kosovo.

Protests sweep Kosovo

Continued from front page

international community did not react with enough vigor and force," she declared, referring to the war in Bosnia among rival wings of the former ruling bureaucracy following the breakup of Yugoslavia. "The only kind of pressure that President Milosevic understands is the kind that imposes a real price on his unacceptable behavior."

The governments represented at the London meeting make up the "Contact Group" charged with monitoring the Dayton accords — the agreement signed on a U.S. military base that spells out the partition and occupation of Bosnia. Their conference ended in division. The representatives of Washington, Bonn, Paris, Rome, and London eventually agreed that new sanctions should be imposed on the government of Yugoslavia, though the French and Italian officials were reluctant. The proposed sanctions include a new arms embargo, denying visas to those deemed responsible for repression in Kosovo, and cutting financial credits to Belgrade. The Russian foreign minister agreed to the first two proposals, but rejected the third. The two proposals on which there was agreement are to be presented to the UN Security Council for a new council resolution. The group agreed to meet again on March 25 to assess further action.

Despite the hue and cry in the big-business press over human rights in Kosovo, most imperialist governments in Europe are trying to close their borders to Albanians fleeing the repression there. The German government has announced that deportations of Kosovo Albanians from its soil will continue.

Mass protests against Serb repression

The mass outpouring of protests in Kosovo March 9 came as Serb troops entered their 10th day of a military operation against supporters of independence for the region. Among other slogans the tens of thousands who marched in Pristina chanted, "Drenica! Drenica! Drenica!" That region in central Kosovo, where there is strong support for the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK), was a particular target of Serbian military attacks. Serbian cops and troops sealed off Drenica and pounded the towns and villages there with artillery barrages. Serb police faced armed resistance by fighters of the UCK.

A UCK statement published in *Buikou* daily in Pristina described resistance to Serbian attacks. "Units of the UCK fought the Serbian police and army for four days in 15 villages in the region of Drenica," the statement said, "killing dozens of enemy Serbs."

Reporting from Pristina in the March 7 *Financial Times* of London, Guy Dinmore wrote that armored personnel carriers and attack helicopters were involved in the operation by Serbian forces targeting the villages in Drenica. His report put the death toll at more than 50; the number has gone up considerably since.

Many of the dead are reportedly civilian men who have been shot in cold blood by Serbian cops. Women and children have also been executed. On March 10, Serbian police seized the bodies of 51 Albanians killed in the assaults and used bulldozers to bury them in mass graves, less than two days after their bodies had been turned over to local Kosovan officials. The week before, more than 50,000 people had turned out for the funeral of 24 victims of the police violence.

Up to 45,000 Serbian troops are reportedly now part of the occupation force, and the Serbian government is arming those of Serbian descent who live in Kosovo. Some Serbian refugees from Croatia and Bosnia who the Milosevic regime settled in Kosovo have been called to serve in the Serbian army. Serbian nationalism has been a hallmark of the Milosevic regime in its efforts to consolidate control over as much of Yugoslavia as possible.

Origin of the conflict in Kosovo

Kosovo was an autonomous region of the Serbian Republic until 1989. This status was revoked by the Serbian government following a wave of working-class resistance to austerity conditions, led by miners and others in Kosovo. The autonomy status had been won in 1974 following a series of protests demanding a republic. Albanians constitute about 90 percent of Kosovo's population; most other residents are Serbian.

Faced with mass resistance to the violation of the autonomy rights at the start of the 1990s, Belgrade proceeded to impose police terror, arbitrary arrests, and torture. Thousands of state workers and teachers who refused to work and teach in Serbian were fired. Albanian language schools and universities were forced to close in 1991 and have remained shut since. In an act of mass defiance, many residents have resorted to a system of parallel schools (see accompanying article on page 13).

In 1992 elections, which were not recognized by the Serbian regime, Ibrahim Rugova of the Democratic League of Kosovo was elected president of the Republic of Kosovo. Rugova declared Kosovo independent and set up a parallel government to the one loyal to Belgrade.

Under pressure, Milosevic signed an agreement with Rugova in 1996 under which schools were supposed to reopen at the beginning of this year, with instruction in the Albanian language. "This agreement was not implemented," said Fehmi Agani, a leader of the Democratic League, which sparked a renewal of mass protests by Albanians. "Milosevic thinks that if the agreement was put into effect it would become a step for further demands especially for independence" of Kosovo, Agani stated.

Reflecting popular frustration with dead-end negotiations with Belgrade, independence forces such as the UCK have grown since then. A statement by the UCK broadcast over Radio Tirana vowed to "continue the struggle for Kosovo's independence," and appealed to the people of Serbia and Montenegro. "You are not threatened by the UCK. On the contrary, you are threatened by the terrorism" of the Belgrade regime, "which for its own interests is ready to sacrifice you." Edita Tahiri, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the parallel Kosovo government, has called on imperialist forces of

NATO to send "a peace-keeping force in Kosovo in order to stop further bloodshed." These kinds of appeals by a layer of the leadership have been echoed by some in the demonstrations carrying signs stating "Where is NATO?"

Using anti-imperialist demagoguery, Belgrade officials cite statements like those by Tahiri as a rationalization for the brutal repression of Albanians. Pavel Bulatovic, Minister of Defense in Belgrade, declared, "The future of Albanians in Kosovo can not be decided by NATO but only by the Yugoslav government." The Stalinist regime in Serbia also took punitive measures against five newspapers in Belgrade. The district attorney accused them and a TV channel with "false reporting" and "helping Albanian terrorists" in Kosovo, referring to the UCK. The censored newspapers reported on Serbian police killing unarmed Albanian civilians.

Support for Kosovo struggle in region

The brutal crackdown by the Milosevic government has not only sparked a response by hundreds of thousands of Kosovo Albanians, but also led to protests in neighboring countries. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, more than 60,000 people demonstrated on March 6 in solidarity with the struggle in Kosovo. The protesters gathered in Marshall Tito Square, in the capital city Skopje, chanting "UCK! UCK! UCK!" and "We will give our lives but we will never give up Kosovo." Some 20 percent of the 1.9 million people in Macedonia are Albanian, mostly concentrated in the region of Tetovo. The Albanian national minority there has also been fighting to extend its rights to use the Albanian language, especially in educational institutions, and has also faced the repression from the regime in Skopje. A day before the large protest, the mayor of Tetovo and the president of the municipal council of that city were sentenced to two and a half years in jail for refusing to lower the Albanian flag over municipal offices.

In the Albanian workers state itself, regular demonstrations have taken place in Tirana protesting Belgrade's terror in Kosovo. On March 8 Albanian president Rexhep Meidani addressed a demonstration of 20,000 in Tirana.

Albania was rocked by an eight-month armed rebellion in 1997. Hundreds of thousands of workers, farmers, and youth rose up against the procapitalist government of Sali Berisha. The armed forces of the state largely dissolved, as town after town in the south fell to the armed population. A brief coalition between Berisha's Democratic Party and the Socialist Party called for imperialist intervention to in order to restore

Continued on Page 14



Pathfinder map by Jay Ressler

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

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Two, Three, Many Che Guevaras. Multimedia presentation of art works of Che, interviews with associates and more. Created and presented by Fabian Wagmister, Prof. of film and TV at UCLA. Fri., March 20, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Puerto Rico: The Case for Independence. Speakers: Lorenzo Roselló, National Commit-

tee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War; and Greg McCartan, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 20, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

From Iraq to the Caspian Sea Region: The U.S./NATO War Drive Against the Russian Workers' State. Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani. Fri., March 20, 7:30 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Socialist Candidate for Mayor Speaks. Speaker: Ruth Gray, Communist League candidate for mayor of Christchurch. Fri., March 20, 7 p.m. 19 High St.

Book Fair in Havana. Speaker: Patrick Brown, Communist League and participant in the International Book Fair in Havana. Fri., March 27, 7 p.m. Both events held at 199 High Street (corner High and Tuam). Donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

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Maybe Iraqis forgot to dumb it down — Chiming in on the White House propaganda that the Iraqis are misapplying "oil-for-food" funds, a former World Bank econo-



Harry Ring

mist recalled that when Iraq was developing a "supergun" they were so clever that manufacturers thought the barrel parts they were supply-

ing were for an oil pipeline.

Bill of Rights as toilet paper — California parole officials said they put rap singer C-BO back behind bars because he made a new album that violated a parole condition that he not record lyrics that "promote the gang life style [or are] anti-law enforcement." C-BO had accepted the parole condition because he felt it would be overturned on appeal.

Capitalism and 'holy matrimony' — Liz Heron, a single mother and student, wrote the Arizona state legislature suggesting more child-care assistance for single parents trying to complete

their education. A state rep responded, "perhaps you could... solve your financial troubles by remarrying." Declared Heron, "To say that marriage should be reduced to a financial situation was insulting."

P.S. — Check out what Marx and Engels had to say about marriage and capitalism in *The Communist Manifesto*. (Pages 39 – 40, Pathfinder edition.)

Don't pause, to think — A Miami-area school board member wants school children not to pause before saying "under God," as most apparently do, while reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Originally,

the pledge declared, euphemistically, "one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." In 1954, during the witch-hunt, Congress added "under God."

And cut back food stamps? — The West Virginia legislature is weighing a measure to legalize collecting and eating animals killed running in front of vehicles. Proponents said if folks are encouraged to eat their roadkill it will save on paying state workers to remove carcasses.

Vilest of the week — Since 1995, the government of Peru has waged a campaign of forced steril-

ization, with rural indigenous women the principal target. In the cynically named "family planning" drive, Health Ministry teams are assigned quotas and put brutal pressure on women to submit to sterilization, reported the February 27 *Wall Street Journal*.

Complicity plus — Where do the pious folk in Washington stand on Peru's sterilization program? Dr. Yong Motta, health adviser to president Alberto Fujimori, declares that the U.S. Agency for International Development has "been helping the family planning program from the first."

Background to the struggle in Kosovo

Below we reprint excerpts from "Report from Kosovo" in *The Truth about Yugoslavia: Why Working People should Oppose Intervention*. The article, as well as most of the book, was first published in the *Militant* after reporters visited Yugoslavia in July 1992. Copyright © 1993 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted with permission.

BY ANNE HOWIE
AND NATASHA TERLEXIS

From the moment you enter Kosovo, tension is palpably in the air. At the approach to the area's main city, Pristina, all incoming and outgoing vehicles are stopped, boarded by armed police, and checked for

BOOK OF THE WEEK

young men evading the draft.

Kosovo is a plateau of good farmland surrounded by mountains. Ninety percent of its two million inhabitants are ethnic Albanians. As Yugoslavia disintegrates, a tug-of-war is going on over demands for independence raised by many Albanians in hopes of a better future and the attempts by the government of Serbia to maintain its control over the region.

The village homes in the area are built in the traditional manner, with interior courtyards surrounded by high walls. This predominantly agricultural area has seen considerable industrial development in the past four decades. It was a major producer of electricity for the former Yugoslavia and is the site of coal and other mines.

Today factories surrounding Pristina seem to be closed for the most part, with broken windows and tall grass in the yards. Around a stark center of government buildings wind communities of prefabricated housing dotted with small shops and cafes. Police guards in town carry automatic weapons and a tank stands at the entrance of the police station. Photographs of the city center are not permitted.

The victorious Partisan struggle against Nazi occupation in World War II turned into a deep-going revolution, actively involving hundreds of thousands in Yugoslavia. Farmers and working people of all nationalities, including Albanians, participated. By the mid-1940s the vast bulk of the country's industry had been nationalized, while 95 percent of arable land was distributed to small peasants who previously had none.

In the years that followed, Albanians were recognized as a distinct national group for the first time, their language became one of Yugoslavia's official languages, and Albanians won the right to education in their own language.

The country's first five-year plan was inaugurated in 1947, including an allocation of additional resources to the more economically backward regions of Yugoslavia.

Flaka Surroi, member of the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms, based in Pristina, says that Kosovo realized its highest level of economic development following these measures.

In spite of this, Kosovo remains the poorest region of the former Yugoslavia. According to Mihailo Markovich, vice president of the ruling Serbian Socialist Party, if the average of leading economic indicators for all republics in 1980 were 100, then Kosovo would be at 28 as compared with Slovenia

at 230. In the early 1980s the economic situation began to deteriorate, Surroi explains.

In 1974 Kosovo was granted autonomous status following demonstrations demanding a republic.

"In 1981 student demonstrations revived the demand for the status of a republic within the federal state of Yugoslavia," Surroi said. "Such ideas were met with increasing repression." The authorities claimed the Albanian government was behind these demands. Writing the slogan "Kosovo Republic" carried a sentence of six years, according to the Minority Rights Group based in London.

Since 1981 Serbs and Montenegrins have emigrated from Kosovo, accusing ethnic Albanians of intimidation. Since 1985 the situation of Serbs in Kosovo began to feature prominently in the Serbian press, the rights group says. In 1987, 60,000 Serbs signed a petition alleging "genocide" against Serbs in Kosovo.

The Minority Rights Group reports that "there appears to be no basis for the highly emotive charge of genocide."

In the 1990 elections in Serbia, the former Communist Party, renamed the Serbian Socialist Party, won by a landslide. President Slobodan Milosevic ran on a program of uniting Serbia once again, protecting Serb minorities in other republics, and deepening moves toward the market system. The same year regimes led by demagogues using similar nationalist rhetoric came to power in other regions of the former Yugoslavia.

In Serbia, the alliance of opposition parties that is presenting a program of ousting the Milosevic government and stepping up efforts to stop the war in Bosnia shares the view that Kosovo should remain part of the republic of Serbia.

In 1988 the Serbian government began the process of changing the constitution of Serbia, in order to eliminate Kosovo's autonomous status. In July of 1990, Belgrade cracked down further, dissolving the Kosovo parliament.

Strikes and demonstrations rocked the area in response to each turning point in the process, followed by more repressive measures against the population.

"Five hundred thousand Albanians demonstrated in Pristina in November 1989," says Surroi. This was followed by strikes of construction, mine, and other workers.

The Independent Trade Union of Kosovo (ITU) was formed in 1989. Starting with construction workers, it began to recruit members in all industries and services, disillusioned by the unions dominated by the former Communist Party, which were not seen as representing the interests of workers of Albanian origin.

The membership of ITU, according to Surroi, includes "only a small number of Serbs, maybe four or five." The ITU, in September 1990, organized a one-day strike protesting the new labor law. "Most of industry shut down, and 3,000 private shops as well. But in the following months, 64,000 workers were dismissed, and many shops were forced to close for six months to a year," Surroi explains that it is no small matter for the union to function today, since it has "200,000 members—all of them fired."

Workers dismissed have "no access to any form of social security payments." Many live on food sent to the towns by relatives and others in the countryside. Thousands have sought work abroad.

Surroi stated that 1,657 medical personnel have been dismissed, all Albanians, leading to the closure of thirty-eight clinics in Pristina alone. "Many medics now work on a voluntary basis."



1995 Kosovan independence rally at United Nations in Geneva

For more than a year now, schools teaching in the Albanian language—from elementary schools to Pristina's university—have been closed. Previously, Kosovo had a parallel school system in both Albanian and Serbo-Croatian through all levels of education.

"The Albanians are not going to school because they don't want to study the history of Serbia," a Pristina-area high school student of Serbian origin said in an interview. "But they live in this country, they have to."

Surroi, on the other hand, said that the Serbian government introduced a new curriculum that was not accepted by Albanian teachers. "They were asked to sign a loyalty oath to Serbia, and were fired on refusal." Despite the fact that their diplomas are not recognized, says Surroi, students

continue to receive instruction and to graduate out of the private homes of volunteer teachers.

A report issued by the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms states that "since 1989 the Serbian police and army arbitrarily killed ninety-six Albanians, mostly young people. Eighteen of the victims were minors. No police officers or soldiers have been arrested."

Many Albanian youth are due to be drafted into the army of Yugoslavia, which now comprises just Serbia and Montenegro. "Nobody wants to join up," says Surroi.

The UN sanctions against Serbia are hitting the people of Kosovo hard, after the economic dislocations of the past several years. "People are really suffering now. The economic base just keeps going down and down," she says.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS THE MILITANT A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

March 23, 1973

PINE RIDGE RESERVATION, S.D., March 14 — M-16-toting FBI agents again block the roads to Wounded Knee, and armored personnel carriers patrol the fields around the area. Fuel, electricity, and telephone service have been cut off in the latest government attempts to starve out the occupants of this blizzard-besieged village.

It took just one day to violate its March 10 agreement to withdraw its guns, agents, and roadblocks from around Wounded Knee. On March 11, the FBI opened fire on an Indian security van. In the ensuing gunfire one of the agents was wounded. Earlier the same day, four men armed with 38-caliber pistols and fingerprinting equipment were captured in Wounded Knee, and were disarmed and released. Although they claimed to be "postal inspectors," AIM (American Indian Movement) leader Dennis Banks said, "They sure as hell weren't here defending mail boxes."

The district chairmen representing six of the reservation's eight districts met in a teepee in Wounded Knee March 11. After a four-hour meeting they announced: 1) their withdrawal from a government-controlled body — the tribal government system; 2) the withdrawal of the Oglala Sioux from the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, which established the current tribal government system; and 3) declaration of national sovereignty for the Oglala Sioux Nation.

THE MILITANT PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

March 22, 1948

AKRON, March 14 — Freedom of speech took a beating in Akron last week when red-baiting and Jim Crow elements prevented Langston Hughes, noted Negro poet, from lecturing here. Hughes was scheduled to read from his poetry at the YWCA under auspices of the Akron Council on Race Relations, a local anti-discrimination, body made up of labor, Negro, and ministerial figures.

On March 7, three days before Hughes' arrival, the most vicious anti-labor preachers were denouncing Hughes from the pulpit, working up a frenzy of race hate and red hysteria among their followers.

When it became known late Wednesday, the day scheduled for Hughes appearance, that no public auditorium or church was available for the poet's lecture due to the organized campaign of intimidation, President George R. Bass of Goodrich Local 5, of the CIO rubber workers, stepped into the fight. He offered the use of the Local 5 hall for the following night.

However, hysteria in Akron had been whipped up to such a high pitch during the week that a reactionary preacher like Dallas Billington of the Akron Baptist Temple could reach deep into the vitals of the Akron labor movement and overthrow the courageous position taken by George Bass and other militant leaders. The Executive Board of Local 5 was polled Wednesday night and reversed Bass offer by a close vote.

U.S. hands off Kosovo, Iraq

Continued from front page

Yugoslavia, combined with their drive to expand NATO eastward, are part of their efforts to encircle the workers state in Russia. The U.S.-led war moves against Iraq highlight this fact, by taking a step to integrate the regimes in Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic as military components of NATO who U.S. secretary of state [Madeleine] Albright says "are building stronger, leaner, more professional armed forces."

The employer class is preparing the military force it hopes can overturn state property relations and reestablish capitalism — the "rule of law" as they sometimes put it — in Russia and elsewhere in the region. The 500 U.S. troops from the 82nd Airborne Division participating in joint exercises in the Caspian Sea region last year was one example of these military moves.

More than 45 years ago workers and peasants led a revolution in Yugoslavia that broke down national divisions as they fought to win land, democratic rights, and better social conditions. They forged unity in a mighty struggle that overthrew the local landlords and capitalists, as well as the yoke of the imperialist powers in Europe and the United States.

A petty-bourgeois social caste carried out a political counterrevolution against workers and farmers there, consolidated bureaucratic control, and established a police-

state apparatus to maintain the privileges of the caste. The policies of this bureaucratic layer perpetuated disparities in social conditions of workers and peasants and reinforced national oppression and regional divisions.

Under the pressures of a deepening economic stagnation of world capitalism, the Stalinist murder machine that had dominated Yugoslavia began to disintegrate in the beginning of this decade. Various wings of the petty-bourgeois caste that ruled the country, including Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic, have used nationalist demagoguery to grab territory and resources for themselves to maintain or augment their privileged way of life.

The national struggle in Kosovo is dealing a blow against decades of bureaucratic misrule in the Yugoslav workers state.

Forging a working-class leadership with a clear political perspective — independent of any wing of the bureaucratic caste or any capitalist forces — is the only way forward for workers and peasants in Kosovo and the other republics in Yugoslavia. Calls for imperialist intervention weaken working-class solidarity in the Balkans.

That's why working people in the United States and the world over should demand:

No to military intervention in Kosovo!

Lift the sanctions against Serbia!

All imperialist troops out of Yugoslavia now!

Protests sweep Kosovo

Continued from Page 12

state authority. Thousands of Italian, Greek, and other imperialist troops poured in to bring back order. Berisha was subsequently forced out in a general election held in July, and the current government is headed by the Socialist Party. While most of the imperialist troops have withdrawn, 250 Greek soldiers remain in Albania today.

Demonstrations in support of the struggle of Albanians in Kosovo have also taken place in Istanbul, Turkey; Vienna, Austria; Paris; and other cities of Europe.

In Greece, where close to 300,000 Albanian immigrants live, a demonstration of several hundred was held on March 8 in Athens demanding an end to Serb government terror in Kosovo. Albanian immigrants here are mostly undocumented and are relegated to the worst-paid jobs in agriculture and construction. Thousands are deported every year.

Fearing the regionalization of the conflict in Kosovo, the governments of the region have held emergency discussions. Officials of Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, and Macedonia have expressed support for a joint declaration whose chief aim is to call for respect of the current borders in the region along with a "peaceful resolution" of the crisis in Kosovo.

Meanwhile, the Albanian government placed its army on alert on March 7 and canceled leaves for troops stationed on the Yugoslav border.

Albanian prime minister Fatos Nano condemned "Serb repression" during a trip to Greece March 8. "From an historical point of view, [the Kosovo issue] is one of in-

justices imposed on the Albanian nation at the beginning of the century which, at the end of it, remain unresolved," he stated.

The Albanian government has called for an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to discuss measures against Belgrade.

Greek prime minister Constantinos Simitis likewise condemned fighters for Kosovo's independence and called for the respect of current borders. Meanwhile Athens has renewed its call for the formation of a multinational Balkan-based rapid deployment force that could be used in conflicts like in Kosovo. Greek imperialism would play a dominant role in such a force.

The government in the Republic of Macedonia has put its armed forces on alert as well, fearing actions by Albanians to demand national rights there.

The governments of Romania and Bulgaria, both workers states, are using the events in Kosovo to argue for their admission into NATO. Both proimperialist regimes have so far been excluded from the NATO expansion into Eastern Europe, the aim of which is to encircle the Russian workers state in preparation for eventually trying to restore capitalism there by force.

Meanwhile, the imperialist NATO alliance is planning two weeks of military exercises dubbed Strong Resolve involving the European and Atlantic commands. The maneuvers will take place in the Iberian peninsula and northern Europe simultaneously, involving 50,000 troops from 25 countries. Part of the scenario involves "crisis management," such as in Bosnia.

Plebiscite under colonial boot isn't self-determination

Continued from Page 16

political prisoner Rafael Cancel Miranda said in a telephone interview from Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico, that the Young bill is nothing but "political maneuvering that attempts to continue delaying Puerto Rico's sovereignty and freedom."

"This is nothing new," Cancel Miranda added. "It's a way of justifying the unjustifiable. You have to recognize the invasion of Puerto Rico, of a country occupied and ruled politically, socially and economically. There cannot be a plebiscite in a colony, a militarily occupied country."

Former political prisoner Jorge Farinacci, writing about the Young bill in the Puerto Rican magazine *Pensamiento Crítico* last fall, noted that the U.S. government is not moving towards decolonizing Puerto Rico. Instead, the intensification of the North American military presence, plans to install radar equipment on Puerto Rico, and the expansion of U.S. cop agencies on the island all point to "the consolidation of colonial domination," he stated.

Activists in New York who are building a July 25 national march on the United Nations to demand independence and self-determination for Puerto Rico and freedom for Puerto Rican political prisoners expressed similar opinions about the bill.

"The UN decolonization committee is very clear that there's a process to decolonize," said Saulo Colón, a member of the Puerto Rico Collective, one of the organizations in the Comité 98 coalition that is building the march. "You need to be free and sovereign in order to exercise self-determination. Before the process can begin, there has to be a withdrawal of the entire U.S. military presence, and all the political prisoners must be set free."

"We should not legitimize this [Young bill] in any way," Colón said. "People should not participate in this thing. They should march to the UN on July 25."

Pro-independence activists are planning numerous rallies and other activities both on the island and in the United States throughout the year.

Capitalist politicians in the United States of both parties, from President William Clinton to House Speaker Newton Gingrich and Senator Alfonse D'Amato of New York, support the bill, all claiming to back self-determination for the Puerto Rican people. Patrick Buchanan used his February 28 syndicated column to oppose the Young bill and Puerto Rican statehood. The ultrarightist politician cited the cultural war for the "soul of America," the burden of poverty Puerto Rico would present as a state, and how Puerto Ricans would supposedly take away jobs from "high-paid American workers" as the reasons for this position. Instead, he states, he is for Puerto Rican independence. "If Puerto Rico, where but 20 percent of the people speak English and only 16 percent identify themselves as Americans, becomes a state, the United States will become two nations," Buchanan declared.

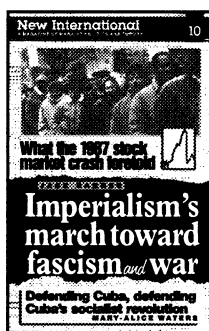
Plebiscites have been organized in Puerto Rico twice before, in 1967 and 1993, with the status quo winning the most votes in both cases. Pro-independence forces boycotted these referenda, with the exception of the PIP, which did participate in the 1993 vote. Those plebiscites were non-binding, requiring no action from Congress.

In 1967, "commonwealth" status won about 60 percent of the vote, and statehood 39 percent. In 1993, about 74 percent of the island's eligible 2.2 million voters participated, with some 48 percent voting to keep the status quo, 46 percent voting for statehood, and 4 percent voting for independence.

The Young bill provides that if neither statehood nor independence receives a simple majority, then commonwealth status remains intact and the Puerto Rican government could hold further plebiscites every 10 years. If statehood receives a simple majority, Clinton would have six months to send Congress a transition plan to be considered within four months. The transition could take no more than 10 years, with Congress taking a final vote to formalize Puerto Rico's statehood.

Rose Ana Berbeo is a member of the International Association of Machinists.

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Tornadoes in Florida hit workers hardest

BY BILL KALMAN

MIAMI — A swarm of tornadoes with gusts of over 200 miles per hour cut a deadly swath through central Florida February 23, killing at least 42 people and injuring 250. Thousands of homes and buildings were destroyed or heavily damaged, and hundreds of vehicles and boats were overturned. Meteorologists estimated that between six and 10 twisters touched down from Tampa Bay on the Gulf coast to Daytona Beach on the Atlantic coast. Hardest hit were the predominately rural areas south of Orlando. A total of 34 of Florida's 67 counties are now eligible for federal disaster relief as a result of the tornadoes and other storms caused by the El Niño weather pattern.

The first response of state authorities in the tornadoes' aftermath was to impose a dusk-to-dawn curfew in the affected areas, keeping people from trying to retrieve anything of value left from the devastation.

They also went into overdrive to get out the word that the area's tourist attractions, principally Disney World, Universal Studios Florida, and Seaworld, were open for business. "It is business as usual in our parks," said Disney spokesman Rick Sylvain. "Some people are either going to be late for work or not here at all, but it's not an appreciable number," he added. Tourism is big business in central Florida, generating some \$14.8

billion in income in 1995.

The primary recipients of federal disaster aid will be businesses and capitalist farms in the area. Aid for working people to get on with their lives is another story. President William Clinton made a well-publicized visit to the area several days after the storms. "I'm glad you're okay. Keep your chin up," the president told Peggy Smith, whose camper that she lives in during the winter was destroyed. Smith was still wearing a bandage over a severely bruised eye. "I've had a lot of black eyes in my life," Clinton told her.

Roger Barnes, another resident of the RV park, wasn't impressed with Clinton's visit. "This isn't doing anything for us, this is just for his own publicity," he told the *Miami Herald*.

The tornadoes came on the heels of very heavy storms, and severely affected agricultural production. Farmers face \$100 million in losses from flooded vegetable and strawberry crops. While small farmers will bear the brunt of these costs, capitalist agricultural interests will raise the price of Florida produce at the supermarket. Orange juice futures, for instance, rose to their highest price in three weeks as a result of the heavy wind and rain.

Tornadoes expose housing problems

The impact of the twisters was worsened by the number of mobile homes in the path of the storms. At least 37 people died in mobile homes and recreational vehicles (RVs). In Florida, some 10 per cent of houses statewide are mobile homes. About 1.4 million people live in 500,000 of these units around the state.

After Hurricane Andrew in 1992, federal standards for mobile housing were re-evaluated by the federal government. One analysis found a mobile home was 21 times more likely to be destroyed than a regular house in a wind storm. "Mobile homes ... are the most vulnerable to wind," said Walt Zaleski of the National Weather Service. "It doesn't take much to roll a mobile home over."

But the manufacturers and sellers of mobile homes balked at adding more anchors, fasteners, rafters, and hurricane straps to these units because of costs. The new federal guidelines only apply to new units, however, leaving the majority of those in central Florida vulnerable. "I would urge someone in a manufactured home to act no differently than someone who's in a brick home," said Chrissy Jackson, marketing



February tornadoes in Florida killed 42 people and destroyed hundreds of homes

director for Steiner Communities, which owns 14 mobile home sites around Tampa Bay. "You go into a bathtub and pull a mattress on top of you."

Since mobile homes have become virtually uninsurable against storms since Hurricane Andrew, workers living in trailer parks can expect little help from insurance companies. The Federal Emergency Management Agency estimates that only about one-half of the homeowners who have applied for federal assistance have insurance.

Lack of warning

An article in the *New York Times* pointed out, "For a state accustomed to both hurricanes and tornadoes, Florida was caught by surprise." Unlike states in the Midwest, Florida has no outdoor siren warning system. Such a system, according to Florida Division of Emergency Management spokesman Craig Fugate, "is too expensive." Instead, government officials suggest that families buy special weather radios that retail at about \$70.

The inequality of government rescue aid to tornado victims was seen in the plight of Possum Hollow, a tiny Black community outside of Wintergarden, Florida. The six mobile homes and two houses in the small trailer park exploded in the storm. For two and a half days no help was dispatched to cut through trees or dig out debris. Just a few hundred feet away, the upscale Country Gardens condominiums were a beehive of rescue activity.

Sam McFarland, the 70-year-old owner of the trailer park, who is Black, said, "So far they haven't done a thing. What limbs were sawed up were sawed by us. What things have been rescued, we rescued them ourselves.... We were the first to be hit and we'll be the last to be recognized."

Orange County emergency management director Bob Lemley retorted, "If a community has fallen through the cracks, that is unfortunate.... [But] if they just sit there without telling anybody... then it seems to me that's their fault, not mine."

Natural crisis becomes a catastrophe

The Florida tornadoes show how a natural crisis becomes a social catastrophe under capitalism. The El Niño weather phenomenon is responsible for deadly droughts, heavy rains, and gale-force winds around the

world. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), this severe weather will accelerate food supply shortages particularly in semicolonial countries.

The agency, in their January/February *Food Outlook* report, listed a "catalog of crises" stretching through Africa, Asia, Latin America, and former Soviet Union countries. The FAO indicates that this weather will compound the problems of malnutrition in Iraq. This is on top of economic sanctions and embargoes. The report added that El Niño weather will result in "a most desperate food situation" in north Korea.

Janet Post, the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Miami in the upcoming election, contrasted the response of the capitalist government to the Florida disaster to the Cuban government's actions when that country was hit by a major storm earlier this month.

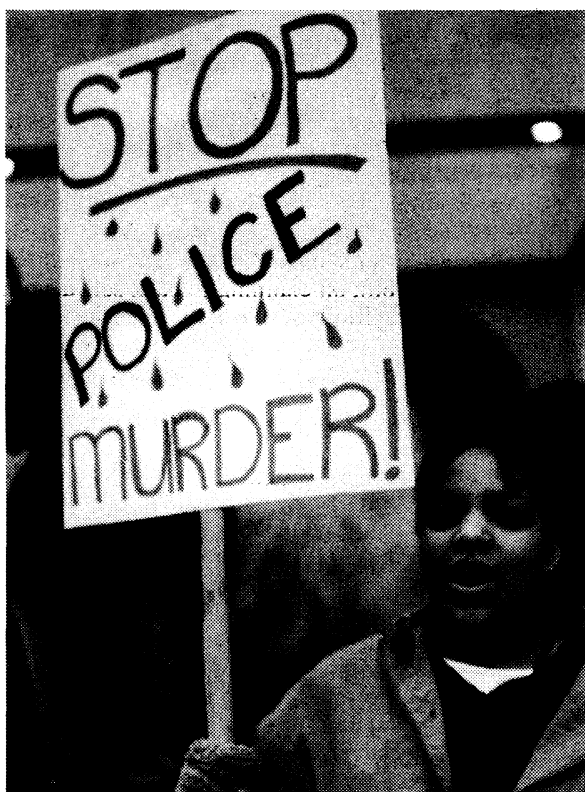
"The first priority for the Cuban government was to save lives, restore power, water supplies, and other social necessities for working people," she noted, "not worrying about protecting private profits." Deaths were minimized because authorities quickly evacuated families from the worst-hit areas. And though the storm wreaked havoc with tobacco, banana, and sugarcane production, agricultural producers didn't face the additional threat of loss of income.

"That's because Cuba is a state where workers and peasants, not capitalist bosses, run the country," Post explained. "A fighting labor movement in the United States should demand that the federal government use its resources to immediately build emergency housing for all victims of the tornadoes, and extend financial aid for everyone who stands to lose a penny in income."

"My campaign demands that the federal government restore and extend all social services, launch a jobs program to build decent housing for workers, and guarantee a living income above the costs of production for small farmers. This can be funded through a 100 percent tax on corporate profits. While El Niño may be a naturally-occurring phenomenon, the capitalist system is something that we can fight against and must replace."

Bill Kalman is a member of United Transportation Union Local 1138.

'Stop the killer cops!'



Militant/Lisa Ahlberg

Close to 70 people gathered at the King County jail in Seattle February 11 to protest the death of Robert Wayne Guy at the hands of prison guards. Protesters demanded an investigation of the prison guards on duty. They also carried signs that listed other victims of cop brutality.

from Pathfinder

Revolutionary Continuity

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Farrell Dobbs

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LETTERS

The tyrants are at home

The Canadian government is now considering a series of new and draconian immigration regulations which are clearly racist and antiworker.

The new rules include: all future immigrants must speak either English or French; have at least two years of a post-secondary education; be under 45 years of age; the spouse and children of a person applying to immigrate must speak either language or that person must put up front the costs for their language training.

Immigrant rights organizations have denounced the proposals and called the public hearings on the new rules a sham. Protesters have been physically removed from the hearings.

All this from a government that says it has joined the war preparations against Iraq out of its alleged concern for protecting the peoples of the region from tyrants.

The tyrants are at home.

Al Cappe
Toronto, Ontario

A pernicious quote

Who said the following? "There must be some point in the elevation of the ex-slave, when he takes the rank of mere citizen, and ceases to be the special favorite of the laws, and when his rights as a citizen, or a man, are to be protected in the ordinary modes by which other men's rights are protected." If you said a present-day conservative arguing against affirmative action, you're wrong. In fact, it was said by a right-wing Supreme Court Justice during a 1883 case. Although reactionaries die, their pernicious ideas survive! Please renew my subscription for a full year as one antidote to the bourgeois press. Robert Pearson Jr.
Croton, New York

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Puerto Rican fighters: plebiscite under colonial boot is not self-determination

BY ROSE ANA BERBEO

NEW YORK — As the 100th anniversary of Washington's invasion and colonization of Puerto Rico nears, the U.S. Congress is considering whether to allow Puerto Ricans to hold a plebiscite on the island's future.

The House of Representatives passed a bill March 4 — known as the Young bill after its main sponsor, Rep. Donald Young of Alaska — which directs Puerto Rico to hold a plebiscite by the end of the year. Residents of the island would choose between becoming a U.S. state, declaring for independence, or keeping the current "commonwealth" status. The vote carried by 209-208.

Two proposed amendments to the bill were defeated. One would have declared English the official language of instruction throughout the United States, including in

Puerto Rico if it became a state. Currently both English and Spanish are the island's legal languages, with the vast majority of its residents using Spanish, their native language. The other amendment would have allowed people born on the island but now living elsewhere to vote in the plebiscite. About 2.7 million Puerto Ricans live in the United States.

The bill has stalled in the Senate, where majority leader Trent Lott of Mississippi said the Senate was too busy to deal with the question of Puerto Rico. Right after the House bill passed, Lott said, "This year, statehood issues are issues we are not going to get into."

Washington conquered Puerto Rico in July 1898, following more than 400 years of Spanish rule. In 1952 Congress created

the commonwealth status, claiming that this decolonized the island. In 1972 the United Nations adopted a resolution in support of Puerto Rico's right to self-determination and independence from U.S. colonial rule. The UN General Assembly has approved similar resolutions virtually every year since 1976.

Under the current status, Puerto Rico's 3.8 million residents are U.S. citizens, subject to the U.S. military draft, but with no vote in federal elections and no say over the country's foreign policy or the budget voted on by Congress. Puerto Ricans vote for a local "autonomous" government, which can impose taxes on the island and manages the distribution of federal funds. Washington currently has a significant number of military bases on the island. Today, for example,

the U.S. Navy claims more than two-thirds of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques.

Backers of the Young bill in the United States and on the island all claim they are for Puerto Rican self-determination, including members of both the ruling New Progressive Party, which is pro-statehood, and the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP). The other major capitalist party, the Popular Democratic Party (PPD), which supports the status quo, is divided, with some favoring the plebiscite and others arguing that the language of the bill favors statehood.

Puerto Rican pro-statehood forces have campaigned intensely around the bill, buying newspaper ads and making campaign contributions to various U.S. politicians.

Longtime Puerto Rican nationalist and ex-
Continued on Page 14

Indonesia protests grow as U.S. rulers push austerity

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Youth and students in Indonesia have stepped up their demonstrations in response to the economic crisis racking that country and protesting austerity measures by the regime there. Meanwhile, officials from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced March 6 that they are delaying \$3 billion in loans to the government until at least April, complaining that the government in Jakarta hasn't gone far enough in implementing "basic conditions" of austerity required from the U.S.-led \$43 billion "rescue package" negotiated last October. "What Indonesia needs to do," said U.S. treasury secretary Robert Rubin, "is reestablish financial stability and be on a sustained reform program."

More than 10,000 students rallied at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta in first week of March. Several days later students organized protests at campuses around the country as cops and soldiers blocked 1,500 youth from marching in Yogyakarta again March 6. That same day some 500 students rallied in Jakarta demanding lower prices. Many protesters demanded that Indonesian president Suharto step down.

The economic crisis choking Indonesia began with the wave of currency devaluations throughout the region that was triggered by the collapse of the Thai baht last July. The Indonesian rupiah has plunged an estimated 70-80 percent since then.

The cheapened currency is crippling most companies, while capitalists attempt to compensate for their sagging profits by doubling and tripling prices of goods across the country. "The devaluation is happening so fast that prices have not been able to keep up," one U.S. investor remarked. "How can you increase prices by 500 percent? People will start throwing rocks through your window. But if you don't you lose money on everything."

Indonesia faces a massive default in loans, with enterprises owing a foreign debt totaling \$137 billion. Foreign banks have minimized relations with Indonesian banks, local lending has nearly halted, and business transactions are paralyzed. "Most Indonesian businesses are technically bankrupt," the February 21 *Economist* asserted.

Unemployment and inflation have skyrocketed, provoking food riots across the country. Government officials estimate more than 8 million workers will be jobless in 1998 — almost 10 percent of the 90 million workers in the country. "Diplomats and other economic analysts say the figure could be nearly twice as large," the *Washington Post* reported March 6.

"People in the countryside are being laid off," said Slamet, a 35-year-old farm worker from a village on the outskirts of Bumiayu. He traveled to Jakarta, the capital, looking for construction work, although the economic crisis has paralyzed most projects.



Jakarta university students demanded price cuts and political freedoms in early March.

"There's so much unemployment on the farm that people come here to get construction jobs," he continued. "If it goes on like this there could be a famine." Nearly 500,000 peasants and farm workers are expected to enter Jakarta searching for work.

In response to the simmering turmoil the regime organized "Operation Yustisia" a crackdown on migrant workers to send them back home. Jakarta also imposed a 25-day ban on mass demonstrations.

More than 35,000 troops were deployed to contain unrest March 10, when Suharto was reappointed president to a seventh five-year term by the 1,000-member People's Consultative Assembly. The day before, the assembly granted "special powers" to the president to crack down on dissent.

The Clinton administration is in a quandary over pressing Suharto into obeying imperialist dictates for the "bailout" program imposed on Indonesia — the world's fourth-largest country with more than 200 million people. Daily meetings on Indonesia have been organized in the White House that included Treasury Secretary Rubin and his financial team, State Department officials, CIA analysts, Pentagon brass, and national security advisers.

On March 2 Washington dispatched former U.S. vice president Walter Mondale to Indonesia to demand Jakarta show "strong, demonstrable commitment to full implementation of the economic reforms agreed to by the IMF." Mondale left a 90-minute meeting with Suharto almost empty-handed and "without a commitment" to the imperialists' "mandates for change," the *New York Times* reported March 4.

Those "mandates" include spending cuts for social programs, closing down insolvent banks, and allowing international investors to take over commercial banks and other financial institutions through mergers and acquisitions. Other measures include industrial "restructuring" that closes down debt-ridden corporations, throwing thousands of workers into the streets.

The Suharto regime has balked at implementing some of Washington's demands, including eliminating food subsidies, in face of the protest actions across the country. Indonesian state secretary Moerdiono said his government would continue subsidizing certain imported goods to meet basic needs during the economic crisis.

"Despite the fact that we already have, and started to carry out, clear and fundamental reforms and a restructuring program, there are no signs yet that the situation has improved," Suharto declared March 1, the day before Mondale's arrival. "On the contrary, the people's life is becoming more difficult."

"This is the reason why I have asked the IMF and other heads of government assist us to find a more appropriate alternative," he added, referring to this scheme as "IMF-Plus."

The "IMF-plus" would include a number of measures broader than the IMF austerity plan, such as fixing the exchange rate of the rupiah to the U.S. dollar. The regime has considered establishing a currency board scheme that replaces the central bank and peg the rupiah at around 5,500 to the dollar — currently the exchange rate is 9,000 to 10,000 to the U.S. dollar. Washington and other imperialists are opposed to a currency board in Indonesia.

With the rupiah plummeting in value since last July, many Indonesian companies cannot make payments on debts to foreign investors. This move is an attempt by the regime to stabilize the currency, halt further devaluations, head off the political instability rocking the country, and salvage the wealth of a layer of Indonesia's capitalist class.

Suharto's family has amassed more than \$16 billion over the past three decades since he came to power during a massacre of workers and peasants in 1965. Between 500,000 and 1 million people died in the blood bath, executed under the pretext of crushing a supposed Communist Party coup.

Pyongyang: Washington is source of conflict in Korea

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The government of north Korea proposed in February to enter direct discussions with political groups and organizations in south Korea to advance the aim of reunifying the peninsula. Talks to discuss formally ending the 1950-53 U.S. war against Korea are scheduled for March in Geneva, Switzerland, that will include Pyongyang, Seoul, Beijing, and Washington.

Washington remains the real obstacle to peace and reunification in Korea, officials of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) noted in a February 24 press release. "Some politicians of south Korea are now reportedly busy garnering support for their call for the adoption of a 'Six-Nation Joint Declaration' for inter-Korean peaceful coexistence," the statement said. "By the 'Six Nations' they mean the two halves of Korea, the United States, China, Japan, and Russia. The call may sound good. But it is a silly and dangerous 'plan.'"

The DPRK statement continued, "Stability and peace have not been ensured on the Korean peninsula not because there is no 'declaration' by its neighboring nations but because the United States has still kept huge armed forces in south Korea and presented military threats to the DPRK though the cold war ended long ago."

Washington has stationed 37,000 troops in south Korea, with a pledge to send 500,000 to 600,000 more soldiers there in the event of a military confrontation.

"Recent accounts suggest that in 1994 the United States and South Korea came much closer than most people realized to a war [against Pyongyang] that could have resulted in hundreds of thousands of casualties," the *New York Times* reported February 25.

The north Korean government has called for ending joint military exercises between Seoul and Washington as one step toward "reconciliation and unity."